The Christ of the Old Testament

EDWARD MACK

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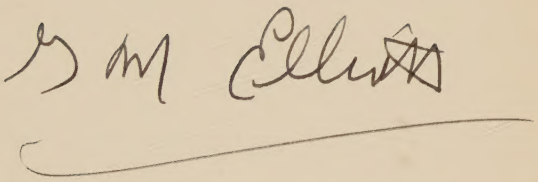

The Christ *of the* Old Testament

Studies in the Beginnings and Growth of Messianic Prophecy

By

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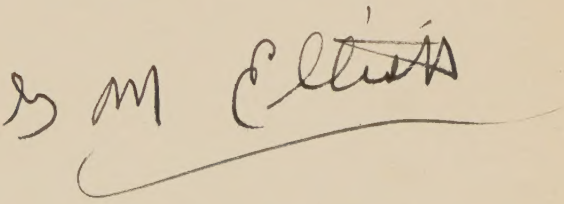

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To My Father

JOSEPH BINGHAM MACK

A Student of Prophecy
At Whose Feet I Caught the Vision

THE FOREWORD

SOME one has said that God's plan for salvation runs like a golden thread through all man's spiritual history. God's plan is more than a thread, it is the whole warp of the web, in which the woof is made up of all man's struggles since the beginning. Man's institutions, his governments, laws, customs, schools, and his social and religious organizations formed a very rotten woof. The web woven without God's help was all "filthy rags." The Old Testament teaches us that through all the ages the Master Weaver is God. His plan of salvation is the golden warp which has saved the web from falling to pieces. Under His hand man's institutions are growing better, the web of human life is becoming ever finer and stronger, and when "His Kingdom comes" it will all be fine gold, woof as well as warp.

Holding this belief, I count it an honor to write the foreword to the present book telling of the growth of this plan in the Old Testament. Having read with great profit the author's former book, "The Preacher's Old Testament," I eagerly seized the opportunity, kindly given me, to read his new one and have been greatly benefited by it. It is a thoroughly scholarly book, treating convincingly all the important results of modern investigation, and yet it is so clearly and

beautifully written that the lay reader is carried along on the argument as by an irresistible flood.

This book meets a serious need of the time. We have heard so much and become so obsessed of late with futile discussions of the so-called "higher criticism" of the Old Testament, of the historical problems developing out of archaeological research, and especially of the natural science of the Bible—which, by the way, this Book of Religion was never intended to teach, because God gave us the Book of Nature to study for ourselves—that we need to have our attention turned again to the story of God's plan for the salvation of men, as told in the Old Testament.

Our author shows that there is a Gospel in the Old Testament, as well as in the New; that there is a Divine Person whose footsteps are followed through all ancient history; a Redeemer, a King Immanuel, dreamed of, sung of, typified, prophesied, by the "Holy men of God" in all the ages, as "they were borne along by the Holy Spirit." He shows that this ideal of the Messiah developed gradually in the inspired record, as men were able to understand it. "The Seed of the Woman" becomes the "Son of Abraham," the "Son of David," the "Son of God," and so gradually grows through history, law, poetry, and prophecy into the "Anointed One," the "King of Righteousness," "Immanuel," "God with Us." So in time men were prepared to understand the whole glorious plan, until finally through Isaiah

the Messiah is revealed in all His supernal love as the "Suffering Servant of Jehovah," "the "Vicarious" Sacrifice, and our "Penal Substitute,"—titles which our author rightly holds can never be misconstrued and should never be forgotten.

The cure for all doubt will be found in the honest study of the Messianic Prophecies of the Old Testament in connection with their fulfillment in the New. The answer to this "new paganism," which denies the divinity of Jesus, refuses to accept the doctrine of "vicarious" sacrifice, makes of the Atonement nothingness, and would dissipate into mist our hope of Immortality, is found in this Gospel of the Messiah. I hope, therefore, that this book may be widely read and believe that it will help to give a surer faith to many a feeble heart.

CHARLES WILLIAM DABNEY.

Houston, Texas.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE substance of these chapters was first brought into form for a series of talks on Prophecy to Sunday School teachers in the First Presbyterian Church of Richmond, Va. Request for such a course of Bible study had been made by the Session of that Church. The chapters were brought into the final form, in which they are now published, as lectures delivered in various Conferences in China during the summer of 1925, at Peitaiho, Kuling, Mokanshan and Tenghsien, under the support and direction of the Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund. They are now published in response to numerous requests that they be put into such permanent form.

The author claims no originality for the views and interpretations which these lectures present. Nor must the reader begin his journey through these pages with the anticipation that the theories and problems of Prophecy will be handled technically and comprehensively. The author has only given expression in a simple way to a personal experience in the most important and most fruitful field of Old Testament studies, *the* field which really counts.

Richmond, Virginia.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL VIEW OF PROPHETICAL LITERATURE

IN recent years the conflict of opinion over the literary and historical problems of the Old Testament has diverted attention from the real content of this most important record of ancient religion. Compared with the mass of this controversial and merely propædeutic literature, the amount of Messianic material available for study from modern writers is meager. The inquiring reader finds few text-books covering the field, and in his quest must glean here and there from introductions and interpretative works. Strangely enough, modern Old Testament theologies contain scant purely Messianic discussion.

Necessarily, therefore, an inadequate idea of the scope and emphasis of the Messianic message of the Old Testament is generally prevalent. Sometimes it is supposed that prophetical literature is confined to the sixteen canonical books of the Major and Minor Prophets. Others suppose that Messianic Prophecy is merely a matter of sporadic and emotional utterance, without any intimate relation to the comprehensive literature and the vital thought of Israel.

To remove these false impressions, and to put the Messianic hope in its proper place as the heart of the Old Testament, is the purpose of this series of studies.

The Hebrew Canon of Prophecy

The Jewish editors, or collectors, of the Old Testament books, in the order in which they have come down to us, accepted as prophetical a larger number of these books than is indicated in our English Old Testament. These original editors put the books of prophecy into two classes:

1. Our fifteen books of prophecy as arranged in the English Bible, grouped as

(1) Major Prophets, including Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel; and

(2) Minor Prophets, or sometimes called "Book of the Twelve," including all from Hosea to Malachi, exactly as in our English Bible order. So that, concisely stated, our prophetical books, as found in the English Bible, were grouped as four books in the ancient Jewish Canon: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and The Book of the Twelve, all of which were known as the "Latter Prophets."

The book of Daniel was not classified by these ancient editors as one of the Latter Prophets, but, probably because of its manifest apocalyptic character, was placed in another part of the

Hebrew Canon, that is, the third group, known as "*The* (Sacred) Writings." This conception of Daniel finds a parallel in the New Testament, where the book of Revelation is not grouped with the Epistles, although like them in letter form, but is placed by itself and apart, as an apocalyptic book.

2. In addition, there was a second group of prophetical books, called the "Former Prophets," which included the historical books of our English Bible from Joshua to II Kings, and also counted as four books in the Jewish Canon, as follows: Joshua, Judges, Samuel (I and II), and Kings (I and II).

To the Hebrew mind it was a natural conclusion to classify these so-called historical books as prophetical, for the following reasons, from among many others:

(1) They were considered to have been written by prophets. In II Kings three chapters are taken almost verbatim from Isaiah (36-39), and one from Jeremiah (52). There are also frequent references to prophetical authorship.

(2) The prophets are the central, heroic figures of these books, always greater than priests or kings. On this honor roll are such heroes as Joshua, Eli, Samuel, David, Elijah and Elisha.

(3) The plan and purpose of these six books is prophetical, or sermonic. They are "preaching" books, and the prophet was essentially a

preacher. They are always making appeal to Israel from the bitter consequences of apostasy, from the grace of forgiven sins, from the unfailing kindness of Jehovah, to turn from idols and from oppressive injustice to Jehovah their God. Aptly indeed may they be classed as books of prophecy.

These eight prophetical books of the Hebrew Canon, its four Former and four Latter Prophets, cover approximately one-half of the whole field of Old Testament literature.

Prophecy Coextensive with the Whole Old Testament

But this is not all of the story. Other parts of the Old Testament, besides the distinctively prophetical books considered above, are well stored with prophetical passages and purpose. This is true alike of Law, Poetry and Wisdom literature.

The first gospel message is found in Genesis (*3*:15) in the promise that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, eventual victory out of present defeat and sorrow. The books of the Law are laden with messages of hope in a Coming One, whether in legal institution, such as Passover or Sin Offering, or in historical symbol, such as the brazen serpent.

Job looks up for the Redeemer, who is to vindicate. Proverbs tells of incarnate Wisdom,

the Admonisher and Advocate. Even in the despair of Ecclesiastes may be seen an index finger pointing toward hope in the future, not nigh, and yet not lost altogether to the vision of faith.

However, it is in the Psalms that we are always finding the fairest and clearest expression of the Messianic Hope, as for example, in the introductory Second Psalm, placed at the gateway of the book of Psalms to tell those about to enter, how often in its pages they will find the promise of the Lord's Anointed. For this reason the Psalms are so frequently quoted in the New Testament as messengers of the Messiah.

If now we turn our attention to the prophets themselves, who held these high hopes of the future and kept alive the Messianic longing, we shall find them present throughout all the ages of Old Testament life and literature. One of these prophets was Enoch, who rebuked the wickedness of his day and brought immortality to light. Noah, the fourth generation from Enoch, was also a preacher of righteousness, and himself a child of Messianic hope.

From these ancient preachers on down to the unknown prophet, whose book is called "Malachi," that is, "my messenger," no age failed of its prophetic teacher and leader. Time would fail to tell of Deborah and Barak, of Samson and Eli, of Nathan and Gad, of Jehoiada and Jere-

miah and Daniel, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, out of weakness were made strong.

While present everywhere in the Old Testament story, it is evident also that these prophets are the most important and most interesting personages in the story. The centers of light and interest in the Old Testament are its famous prophets, whose names have been cherished, as their victories of faith have been honored, in all ages. On this roll of fame are Abraham, father of religions; Moses, lawgiver, and organizer of an undying people; Samuel, confidant of God, and maker of kings; David, ideal king, and singer of songs that can never die; Elijah, champion of the sole and spiritual deity; Isaiah, the seer, whose clear spiritual vision ran ahead of the centuries; and Jeremiah, fearless contender for righteousness and God in perilous days of infidelity and corruptness. To indicate the focal centers of Old Testament life and history, we need only to call the roll of the prophets. All the interesting and heroic story of the Old Testament people is, in a word, the field of prophecy.

Once more, our proposition that the field of prophetical literature is practically co-extensive with the Old Testament is further confirmed when we take into account the nature and contents of the prophets' message. Both the modern rationalistic-historical and the older orthodox

methods of interpretation have given too narrow a view of the content and meaning of prophecy. On the one hand it is more than moral and social leadership, while on the other it reaches further than foretelling. The content of prophecy approaches close to the sum total of the Old Testament message. Jesus showed to His disciples from the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, in ALL the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself.

1. The message of prophecy was in part warning and admonition. "O son of man, I have set thee a watchman over the house of Israel. If thou speak not to warn the wicked, his blood will I require at thy hand." (Ezekiel *33.*) Israel was a wayward and selfish people, and but for the voice of prophets might have been lost long ago. The tragedy of the Old Testament is that Israel would not hearken to its prophets. Said Jehovah, "I have sent my prophets, rising early and sending them, but ye would not hear." (Zechariah *7.*)

2. The prophet was a teacher of his people. Israel had much to learn, and the lessons learned seemed like the morning's lifting mist, so easily forgotten. The law of Moses was the instruction which Israel needed for character and nation building. "He taught," or "thou shalt teach," are the recurrent phrases in his books. In time of doubt and hours of need the people turned to

the prophets to know the truth and the way. Said Jehoshaphat on an occasion of uncertainty, "Is there not a prophet of Jehovah here?" Saul's servant turned his master's attention to Samuel, who could tell them all things. In Israel's new age, when a king was now to reign, Samuel the prophet wrote the manner of the kingdom for them (I Samuel *10*).

3. The prophets were the national leaders in reformations, in national peril, in all great crises in general. Moses led them victorious into Canaan. Samuel brought them out of bondage to the Philistines. David welded the jealous tribes into national unity. Elijah led a revolt against the corrupting sensualism of Baalism, Elisha, his successor, cheering Jehu on in his effort to root Baal worship out of Israel. Isaiah was a tower of strength in Assyrian invasion. And Haggai and Zechariah made the people strong to rebuild the House of God. In every crisis a prophet arose; in every forward movement a prophet led.

4. The prophet stood in a peculiarly intimate relation to God, and as the friend of God was given to know the secret of His will. "Shall I hide from Abraham my friend?" said Jehovah about the destruction of Sodom. "Jehovah will do nothing except He reveal it to his servants the prophets" (Amos *3*). And so being given some knowledge of the will of God they were sent as His messengers to make known His will

to His people. Jonah was given a message to Nineveh, corrupt mistress of the world. Isaiah's call to go with God's message to Israel is a classic of prophetic vocation. These men were ambassadors for God, as though God did beseech men through them.

5. The prophets were the moral and spiritual eyes and consciences of their day. They reasoned of righteousness and of judgment to come. Moses codified eternal truth and right in legal phrases, which can never be forgotten. Isaiah opened up to his age, and to all ages, a vision of moral excellence and of spiritual fineness, which cannot cease to be uplifting.

6. But while all of these phases of prophetic vision and endeavor are of the greatest interest, it is not the purpose of this course of studies to enter into any of them. There is yet another field of prophetic ministry, of more value and interest to the Christian than any of these others. It has been a strangely neglected phase of prophecy. This special and important element in prophecy which we are to consider is the prophet's power to foretell, his vision of the future, his message of Messiah and His reign. While this is not the all of prophecy, it is an important part of prophecy, especially for the Christian, who holds in his hand the New Testament, complete answer to all Old Testament prophetic yearnings, and the filling of its outstretched hands.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NEW TESTAMENT VIEW OF PROPHECY

THE clearest light ever thrown upon the ancient prophecies shines from the New Testament. It will therefore be helpful to us, if we consider, before going further, the attitude taken by New Testament preachers and writers toward the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. This is not anticipating the conclusion, nor a begging of the question. The Christian student, with his confidence in the authority and accuracy of the New Testament, has the right to begin his argument with it; and more than this, it is his bounden duty to do so. The New Testament is the best guide ever offered for a journey of investigation into the Old because:

(1) It is in a position to give the best view possible, having been written out of a real experience of religion so near to Old Testament days. Its point of view, its doctrinal formulæ, its vocabulary and illustrations are all those of the Old Testament. The writers of all its books, probably not excepting Luke, were Jews. They were learned in all the knowledge and traditions of their nation and had in their own souls the ineradicable yearning of their race.

(2) Like a telescope, the New Testament brings the ancient promises nearer to us, making their outline and atmosphere clear and real. It would be just as foolish to plead that the astronomer must learn all about a star with limited natural vision and mere theoretical study, before turning the lenses of his great telescope upon it, as to refuse the aid of New Testament saints for the better understanding of Old Testament seers.

(3) The New Testament rightly claims to be the true interpretation of the Old. And all succeeding time has increasingly justified this claim. When the Woman of Samaria shifted the conversation to the Old Testament hope of the Messiah, expected by both Samaritan and Jew, Jesus said: "I that speak unto thee am He" (John *4*). To John, inquiring "Art Thou He that should come?" Jesus sent back an affirmative answer in phrases of Isaiah (Matt. *11*). Paul in describing its interpretative value, as opening to view the hidden mysteries of the Old Testament, said well and with finality "in Christ the veil is done away" (II Cor. *3*).

We must not fail to keep in mind the nature and extent of the Holy Bible, which the New Testament writers read and loved. It seems foolish that we need to recall, and yet so we must, that they did not have our New Testament books, but only those of the Old Testament. How much more blessed are we in the possession of

the grace and glory of the New as well as of the wisdom and wonder of the Old! But exactly as we love the New, and look in faith to it, so also did they love and use the Old. Minor questions of criticism, as to whether Christ did, or did not, affirm the historicity of Jonah in His quotation from that book, or as to the unity of Isaiah when the second part is quoted as "Isaiah saith" (as in Romans *10* and *15*), shrivel into insignificance before the ever-present love and reverence of Christ and His apostles for the Old Testament. All through the pages of the New Testament we have impressed upon us the devotion and confidence with which they looked to it, and used it.

This is a fact of Scripture which modern, easy-going criticism needs to ponder more seriously. The attitude of the Master, and of those who learned from Him, toward the Old Testament is quite different from the supercilious attitude of our modern schoolmen. To them these old books were "*The* Scriptures," their Holy Bible, the very Word of God. We may with profit, now, consider their method of handling the prophecies, which were the cherished promises of their Bible.

1. The Method of John the Apostle. In Revelation 19:10 we read: "the witness of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." John had been beholding the marvels of the Divine operation among men, under angel guidance (Rev. *17*:1). So overwhelmed was he with the wonder and glory of

it, that he fell down in worship before the angel. But the angel said: "See thou do it not; I am a fellow-servant with thee, and with thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The witness to Jesus by angels, apostles and martyrs is the same as the witness of prophecy. Prophets and apostles and angels are at one in proclaiming Jesus.

Other illustrations of John's method may properly be considered under the method in which Jesus appealed to prophecy (see 5 below), as recorded in the Gospel of John.

2. The Method of Philip the Evangelist. No incident of the New Testament attitude toward prophecy is more in point and more illuminating than Philip's meeting with the Jewish Prime Minister of Candace, Queen of Abyssinia. This Jew had been to Jerusalem, after the custom of his people, to attend one of the great Jewish festivals. Strange and heated discussions had met him in the holy city of his fathers. One called Jesus, of Galilee, claiming to be Messiah, had been put to death on the cross for blasphemy and treason, for he claimed to be both king and Son of God. But it was reported that on the third day He rose from the tomb, and had ascended on high to glory with the Father, and His disciples were boldly proclaiming everywhere His Deity, and that in Him the promises of the

Scriptures were fulfilled. The festal visitor had procured a copy of the Prophets to read, for himself, and so eager was his interest, he could not wait until his return to his southern home, but was reading aloud from Isaiah as he journeyed in his chariot. Philip, led of the Spirit, comes upon him near Gaza, as he was reading in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, at the Providential, not the psychological, moment. Seeing perplexity in the eunuch's face, Philip could well ask, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Then as together they read onward and came, in verses 7 and 8, to the atoning death of the Servant Messiah, the eunuch's perplexity came to utterance in a significant question, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" We cannot but notice that in his mind there is no thought of a suffering nation nor of a "suffering abstraction." It is of a person the prophet speaks, and who can this strange person be?

Philip's great hour had come. The veil was being pushed aside; and beginning at this Scripture, he announced to him the glad tidings of Jesus. If every Jew today could put aside his absurd prepossession of Messianic nationalism and could read this chapter of Isaiah with prayer and the Spirit's help, he too, out of a joyful conversion, would crave and claim the water of baptism.

3. The Method of Paul. The larger part of the New Testament is the product of actual Pauline authorship, or of Pauline influence, if under the latter statement we included the two books of Luke. No New Testament writer used more habitually, and appealed more often to, the Old Testament. His writings are saturated with the Old Testament, with its doctrines, its ideals, and its phrases. His letters might be called interpretations of the Old Testament in terms of Jesus Christ, even though he wrote chiefly to Gentiles. It should not surprise us, then, to find how frequently he appealed to the Messianic prophecies in order to present Jesus as Saviour. He believed firmly in the Divine authorship and authority of the Old Testament, putting his faith into expression in the words of that well-known passage, the most satisfactory rendering of which may be given thus: "Every Scripture being God-inspired is also profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for education in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, for every good work completely equipped" (II Tim. *3*:16-17). Paul does not here put any condition on inspiration, for he does not say, "if it is inspired." Nor does he intimate that some Scriptures are inspired and some are not. Such ideas are not compatible with text or context. He simply makes a categorical statement of the inspiration of the Old

Testament, those Holy Scriptures in which Timothy had been trained since childhood.

This firm faith of Paul in the divine inspiration and authority of the Old Testament will give the more emphasis to his appeal to its prophecies as fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Only two or three instances of his many appeals to the Old Testament messages of Christ may be, for the lack of space, considered here.

During his first missionary journey, through Asia Minor, in his sermon at Antioch, which was so characteristic of his missionary message, and of such signal ability, that it has been kept on record, these were his words: "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as also it is written in the Second Psalm." (Acts *13*:32-33.)

On another occasion, one of the most critical and most august of his great career, he follows the same method of appeal to the Old Testament. He was standing before Festus, the Roman governor, and Agrippa, King of the Jews, to make defense, not of himself, but of the Gospel which he preached. Knowing that Agrippa had been trained in the Scriptures, and was considered learned in the Law, Paul could appeal to the Old Testament, as common ground. And these are his remarkable words: "Having obtained help of

God I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, and saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts *26*:22-23).

A final quotation will suffice as the clearest and most characteristic specimen of Paul's method. On his second missionary journey he had come to Thessalonica, where there were many Jews with their synagogue. "And Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, expounding and setting before them, that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that (said he) this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is the Christ (Acts *17*:2-3).

From these examples of Paul's ministry of the good tidings of prophetic fulfillment in Jesus Christ, it is natural that we turn with new and sincerer appreciation to his own comprehensive description of his ministry in Corinth: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

4. The Method of Peter. His sermon at Pentecost, the first Gospel sermon, was based entirely on prophecies of the Old Testament: First, the outpouring of the Spirit, as foretold by Joel; then the resurrection of Christ, from the sixteenth

Psalm; and finally His exaltation to power at the right hand of God, as prophesied by David in Psalm *110*—not the customary homiletical order of one text and three heads, but a greater sermon with one Head, even Jesus, and three texts.

In his second sermon, on record in Acts *3,* he makes his appeal, in the same way, for acceptance of Jesus as the Christ of the Old Testament: "those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that the Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled."

But the most important illustration of Peter's method will be found in his second letter, the first chapter, in which seeing his life hastening to its earthly close, he makes his last spiritual will and testament. We cannot do better than let his surprising words speak for themselves: "I think it meet to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the resplendent glory: This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount."

Here, Peter is giving his testimony as an eye-witness to the revelation and proof of Christ's majesty, when heaven came down to earth on the Mount of Transfiguration. Could any witness, or any proof, be more decisive and acceptable than the testimony of those who saw and heard?

Yet there is another witness, and one of more convincing authority, and to this Peter then turns. In addition to the testimony of eye-witnesses, "we have also a more sure word of prophecy." The essential meaning of these remarkable words is not changed by the optional translation, "we have the word of prophecy made more sure" (by the witness of those who saw and heard the Christ); for the Apostle in either case is making his final and decisive appeal for Christ to the Old Testament Prophecies. This is passing strange to us, who value the New Testament above the Old. But not so with Peter; and strange as it may seem, there it stands written; prophecy even more sure than the wonderful word of those who saw: "And we have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed (as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts), knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation; for prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but borne along by the Holy Spirit, holy men of God spoke." Prophecy was not to be understood locally, or

privately, or temporally, as fulfilled in David, or Zerubbabel, or Israel, but as the witness to Jesus Christ the Messiah.

We cannot escape a sense of regret that the Old Testament name for the Expected One, the coming Deliverer, has been lost to us in the processes of translation. Our word "Christ" is the transliteration of the Greek word *Christos,* which in turn is a translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah," meaning "Anointed One." If the Hebrew name "Messiah" had been kept and used, instead of the Greek word "Christ," in the New Testament, much of the Messianic meaning of the New Testament would be clearer to us. The question of the Scribes to John would then read, "Art thou the Messiah?" and Peter's confession would be, "Thou art the *Messiah,* the Son of the Living God," keeping more clearly the close connection with the hope of Prophecy, before trained and untrained students alike.

5. Christ's Appeal to Prophecy. If the foregoing array of New Testament uses of Old Testament prophecies has seemed impressive and convincing, it is not yet all the evidence, not even the best of it. The use of prophecy by Christ Himself is the most remarkable part in the New Testament claim to be the fulfillment of the Old. Christ was continually quoting Old Testament promises as fulfilled in Himself. Again for lack of space, only some of His many appeals to the

Old Testament as witness to His Messiahship can be brought into this limited study.

When He visited Nazareth after His baptism and entrance upon His public ministry, on the Sabbath He went into the synagogue, as was His custom. The people of His home town having heard of His marvelous words and works elsewhere, came with eagerness to hear Him. The lesson in the Prophets for the day was from the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah. After reading the lesson, with the eyes of the multitude fixed on Him, He spoke these momentous words, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." They understood full well the meaning of His words, that He was claiming to be the Anointed One, the Servant of the Lord, who was the most imposing figure in ancient prophecy.

John the Baptist, in Herod's prison, got tidings of the fame of Jesus' words and miracles. To learn if the Christ had truly come, he sent two of his disciples to inquire. The question of John has its depths of pathos. The stern hero knew that his end was near. Had his heroic work been in vain? Must he die in disappointment? "Art thou He that should come," he asked, "or must we wait for another?" The answer of Jesus turns John's attention to the words of Isaiah as found in chapters *35* and *61*.

Especially convincing are the words which Luke records as spoken by our Lord to His disciples

after His resurrection. The disheartened disciples at Emmaus not only had their eyes opened to see the Lord, but also had given to them convincing proof of His Messiahship from the Old Testament, in the Lord's words: "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? and beginning with Moses, and all the prophets, he interpreted unto them, in all the Scripture, *the things concerning Himself.*"

A little while afterwards, coming to the Eleven assembled in the well-known upper room, He reminded them how often He had showed them in the Old Testament the very things which had happened to Him: "These are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke *24.*)

It is evident that our Lord believed and taught confidently that the promises made to the fathers were fulfilled in Himself. If conviction can be made more sure, it will be so through a final and crowning passage.

The fifth chapter of the Gospel according to John contains Christ's argument for His Deity, when His declaration of it had been challenged

by the Jews, after the healing of a helpless cripple by the pool of Bethesda. The argument runs thus:

(1) Judgment is a Divine prerogative; and the Father has committed all judgment to the Son, even with power to raise the dead and call them to judgment.

(2) John gave true witness to Him, and he was a burning and shining light.

(3) The works, which He did, were His witnesses, seen by all men.

(4) The final and climactic argument was His appeal, here as always, to the Old Testament Scriptures: "Ye search the Scriptures, because in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of Me. If ye believe not his writings, how can ye believe My words?"

Here, on the witness of our Lord and His Apostles, we are willing to rest our argument, that the New Testament always maintained the Messianic purpose of the Old Testament, and claimed to be its adequate fulfillment. New Testament saints are the best interpreters of Old Testament seers.

CHAPTER THREE

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

PROPHECY, since its utterance, has fallen among many widely varying interpreters, literally to suffer many things at their hands. These varieties of interpretation run all the scale between the extremes of literalism and allegorism, of mechanistic formalism and rationalistic repudiation. It may help us on our way to consider briefly some of these methods of interpretation. Without committing ourselves to follow any one of these methods, we may reject error in each, and take suggestions from all. The following are merely suggestive and typical phases of interpretation, chosen out of the many.

1. The *Literalistic* view of prophecy, which holds that every word and idea in a given prophecy must have a Messianic interpretation found for it. The same literalism requires a special meaning for every word, or element, of the New Testament parables. Not only the fundamental idea of the growing, expanding mustard seed, but also the branches and birds are to have literal interpretation. To some literalists the moral symbolism of the leaven has more meaning than its expanding and pervading process. Such literalism, taking a lyric message of Isaiah or an apoca-

lypse of Ezekiel, will seek to behold not a noble synthetic picture but a variety of constituent details, with individualistic or egoistic conception of each detail. Consequently, a thousand different minds will find a thousand different interpretations. It is not necessary, for example, to speculate on the difference between the "girdle of his waist" and the "girdle of his loins" in Isaiah *11*:4, or to give prophetic value to each beast in the immediately following picture of peace on earth and good will between man and beast. Every foot, furlong, door or window of Ezekiel's vision (*40-48*), does not require private explanation in order to the prophetic completeness of the Messianic message. The Old Testament is a book of surpassing imagery; its literary adornment of beauty is beyond compare. The gold which Solomon lavished upon the temple was not richer than the wealth of illustrative and figurative beauty, which the inspired writers poured into their message. We must not forget this. Passion for literal detail may cost the loss of the vision of beauty. Busy with this and with that, one can miss the heart of the Old Testament. There is a sane midway ground; if you will, literal, but not too literal.

2. Near akin to the preceding method of interpretation is that view of prophecy, which might be called mechanical and direct. Its adherents suppose that the prophet was entirely dissociated

from his own time and conditions; and, whether wittingly or unwittingly, transported himself to a distant age, and outlined the events and persons of that distant age, without relation of any kind whatsoever to his own day and its needs.

Eve, then, had no thought for her own peril and sorrow, but was to fix her eye on a cross thousands of years away in time. The Immanuel sign had no direct relation to Ahaz and Isaiah and the national crisis then impending, but was written by Isaiah, in order that Matthew might quote it more than seven hundred years later. And, in this view, David did not give any thought to his son Solomon in the covenant and sure mercies of II Samuel *7* and Psalm *72*, but was busied and satisfied entirely with events, which he knew must tarry for a thousand years.

If I have written with over-emphasis, possibly with exaggeration, it has been done consciously, to make clear an error, not to give comfort to the other extreme of interpretation, which would deny the possibility of the vision of the future, and reduce prophecy to the thin, hollow shell of environmental temperamentalism.

As a matter of fact, rationalism in interpretation was a revolt from the formalism and unreality of the older mechanical method, which prevailed some generations ago. The radical called the old formal method "inverted history," meaning that David, Ezekiel or Daniel really

wrote history, as it were, upside down. We can take the revolt of rationalism to heart, and profit thereby, without wandering away after it into devious paths. A mechanical method of interpretation is untrue and unfair to both contents and spirit of the Old Testament. Its unnecessary assumptions lay a heartless and useless load on the bent back of docile faith.

3. The opposite extreme, referred to just above, of the mechanical method may be called the *Historical and Rationalistic* view of prophecy. According to this view, all prophecy must be explained in terms of historical occasion or local condition. It is part of a general theory which holds that the Old Testament is the record of a natural evolution of a people in religious consciousness and expression, and every phenomenon must be submitted to natural explanation. The mind of him who spoke or wrote could not rise above the level of his own age and condition. Therefore, foretelling the future by such as yet undevoloped men is among the things unthinkable.

A queer freak of this school of natural development is its assignment of the apex of spiritual excellence and attainment to the period of the Maccabæans, when, with Canon Cheyne, the glorious Psalms were born and sung. Why this should be thought to be true, no sane mind can tell; and yet radical criticism jogs on with this

queer fancy at the back of its thick skull. The fallacy of radical criticism lies less in literary dissections than in the unsustained assumption that the highest types of literature, particularly the Messianic, are the very latest in the "natural development."

It is sufficient to prejudice the mind against a rationalistic view of prophecy that it must work over and distort the materials of the Old Testament, in order to sustain its contention. If Isaiah wrote that in sixty-five years Ephraim would be deported, then, Irishwise, Isaiah did not write these words of Isaiah 7:10, but some historian recorded them after the event. It was not Jeremiah who predicted an exile of seventy years, but a later historian who recorded a fact by surreptitious insertion into the canonical book of the prophet. If Daniel touches on events of Maccabæan history, then the book of Daniel must be of Maccabæan origin. The real fact about radical criticism is that it denies the fundamental element of the Old Testament, and proposes to remove its vertebral structure. The Old Testament makes throughout a clear-cut claim to be a revelation from God, who promises to lead His people into a future of which He is able to tell them. He proposes to lead them onward by the vision of a destiny. The framework, nerve-system and heart of the Old Testament are prophetic. Who denies this stultifies himself.

4. The true method of interpretation seeks to sift the truth of the various views from the error which lies in each, and to meet all the facts and all the needs in each passage. In a sense, it is eclectic, or synthetic, in that it accepts the faith of the direct view that prophets did foresee and foretell under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and on the other hand does not ignore the evident historical origin, setting and atmosphere of the prophecies. None of the views stated above takes both of these elements of prophecy into account. But we believe that both are present, and must be taken into consideration, in every faithful interpretation.

Some, who interpret prophecy in this way, think of it as having two senses, or meanings: (1) the primary, which has to do with the original historical occasion; and (2) the secondary, which looks to the Messianic fulfillment in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In this view, for example, the Immanuel sign had its immediate significance for Ahaz and the Assyrian peril, but its full meaning was not revealed until the birth of the Saviour. It is not always possible to distinguish these two elements with exactness; for prophecy may often be generic or comprehensive.

We may adopt the happy phraseology of Dr. A. B. Davidson, given in his Old Testament Theology, and also in his thorough and sane article on "Prophecy" in the Hastings Bible Dictionary,

describing this method as historical, genetic and progressive. Prophecy is best viewed as a living thing, growing out of the soil of history and issuing from the pressing needs of the people; but always the same in essence, and having one goal, however and wherever found; and continually growing into larger meaning and clearer outline. The hope of Eve, expressed in terms of her day and need, is the same in reality as the noble vision of the Suffering Servant, pictured to us in the richer words and wider experience of Isaiah *53*.

The prophets used the objects and persons, crises and catastrophes, ideals and yearnings, of their own times, to represent to the people of their own day, for their help and comfort, the hope of the Coming Saviour. So Moses could enjoin statute and sacrifice as holding within their full meaning the promise given to the fathers; and David could raise his living zeal for his son and successor to the high plane of the everlasting Messianic kingdom. In this way prophecy could be poured as balm on wounded hearts, and at the same time become a heritage of hope for all generations.

For the convenient and intelligent study of prophecy, it is necessary to arrange the Bible material under consideration into historical periods. The following divisions, although not historically exclusive or logically rigid, are suggested as a working basis:

1. The ages before the Flood, Genesis, chapters *1-8*.

2. The Patriarchal age, from the Flood to Israel's arrival at Sinai, where patriarchal government yielded to national organization, Genesis *9* to Exodus *18*.

3. The Age of the Judges, of whom Moses was the first, and Samuel the last, Exodus *19* to I. Samuel *12*.

4. The period of the Kings, including the United Kingdom, the Divided Kingdom, and Judah after the fall of Israel, I. Samuel *13* to II. Kings *25*, with many of the prophetical books and Psalms.

5. The Babylonian Exile, Ezekiel and Daniel, and some of the Psalms.

6. The time of reconstruction after the Exile, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

The limited scope of these chapters forbids the thought of using all the material at command. Of necessity, not only must we pass over many important phases of prophecy, but even in the narrower field of Messianic prophecy our attention must be confined to a few representative passages.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROPHECY BEFORE THE FLOOD

IN the first eight chapters of Genesis we find the briefest possible narrative of a long stretch of human life on the earth. Should we accept the chronology of the Septuagint, these chapters cover as many centuries, rather millenniums, as all the remainder of the Old Testament. It is now definitely understood that we have no exact and undisputed chronology of the Old Testament. All systems, which have been worked out of the same numerical references in the text, vary widely in general periods and in details. The Old Testament is not a book of statistics and human annals; it is a message of revelation and redemption.

Whatever our system of dates and numbers, the main fact remains, that these chapters cover a vast expanse of time, and are the record of a most important period in man's life on earth: his origin and early development. Naturally they must be generic, not specific, in character. An incident, or event, chosen for the record of such a long stretch of time, may be characteristic and descriptive of a period rather than of a day. If these great historic records are generic in nature, then also we must expect expressions of Messianic hope in these same chapters to be generic also.

And so, in keeping with their environment, we find them to be.

These chapters are of early origin. Whatever may have been the form in which the early Pentateuchal author found them, they embody the earliest traditions of our race, preserved for us under the gracious providence of the Spirit of God, who watched in tenderness over those ages, as He had brooded over the waste of waters. These narratives, in consequence, are of the greatest importance, although so brief. A single ancient inscription may be of more interest and value than a set of modern folios. Who reads these chapters, let him ponder over them wisely and well, for he has before him records of first importance.

In these chapters will be found five expressions of Messianic hope, in characteristic keeping with the records, in which they have been preserved. Let us take them up in historical sequence.

1. The promise to Eve in Genesis *3*:15 has happily been called the "protevangel," the first Gospel, although not spoken directly to Eve, but in her hearing to the serpent: "He (the seed of the woman) shall bruise thee on the head, and thou shalt bruise him on the heel." The cunning of the serpent had prevailed. Sin, sorrow and death had entered into human life. But the tempter was not left to gloat with impunity over the ruin he had caused, nor did God leave His

children to eternal defeat and despair. In the dark hour of apparent ruin, God's word of comfort in the promise of ultimate victory came to cheer. This was the first Messianic promise for the future. The manner of its giving, in an hour of hopelessness, and its way of fitting into the special need of that occasion, are the same as in the clearest and most detailed promises of later centuries. The human family had fallen into sin and sorrow. Husband, wife and child must bear alike the common sorrow. But out of the family so stricken would come deliverance; for its son, in some future day, would defeat the foe, and gain back what had been lost.

2. *The Birth of Cain,* Genesis *4*:1. Our English translation of the last clause of this verse, "I have gotten a man *with the help of* Jehovah," is possible, but is not the most direct and natural interpretation. We owe it, not to the Hebrew, but to the paraphrasing of the Septuagint. The simplest rendering is with the use of the double accusative in the second clause, thus: "And Adam knew Eve, his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man, (even) Jehovah." The same construction of verb with double accusative is found in the sentence which immediately follows: "And again she bore his brother, (even) Abel." If so understood in one sentence, why not in the other? The words "with the help of" in the English versions are in italics,

indicating that they are not in the original text. The briefer rendering "with Jehovah" makes a difficult text, and would introduce the idea of miraculous conception, the prophecy of the virgin birth. In consistency either we should read the two similarly constructed clauses thus: "I have gotten a man, (with the help of) Jehovah," and "Again she bore his brother, (with the help of) Abel"; or we should read them more naturally: "I have gotten a man, even Jehovah," and "Again she bore his brother, even Abel."

The latter and the simpler translation, as given above, is the nearest approach to the Hebrew, and also brings the verse into harmony with the Messianic meaning and purpose of Genesis *3*:15. Eve believed the promise that the child of woman would defeat the enemy, who had brought ruin to her family. Naturally, when her first babe lay in her arms, pure and beautiful, she thought that the promised one had come, and in this hope she cried out: "I have gotten a man, even Jehovah," that is, the One who will be, as the Divine name may be literally translated. Eve was right in her faith in the great fact, that the Deliverer would come some day just as Cain had come, born of a woman; she was mistaken in taking Cain to be the fulfillment, which was to be deferred to the fulness of time in the far distant ages.

This general expectation and individual disillusioning, which we see in Eve, was characteristic

of every generation in the succeeding millenniums. Each age yearned and prayed that the Seed of Promise might come to it. And so God led His people on victorious over despair, with firm faith in the Coming Saviour, from Eve to Mary.

3. Seth, the third son of Eve, was also a child of Messianic hope. "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bore a son, and called his name Seth; for, said she, God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel," Genesis *4*:25. From this verse it appears that Eve, disappointed in Cain, had transferred her hope of the Promised Seed to Abel. Abel killed, with woman's unyielding faith, she still hoped on; and with the birth of a third son she held up her hands again in petition for the fulfillment, in token of which she called him "the appointed Seed." This pathetic insistence of her mother-heart is used by the Spirit of God, in such eloquent simplicity, to show us the saving presence of the Messianic hope in those first days of our race.

4. The fourth occurrence of the Messianic hope in the early chapters of Genesis introduces a new element into the narrative. It came with the birth of the third generation of the human family. By that time the penalty of sin was evident everywhere in the ravages of disease and envy and hate. Loved ones were dying, corruption was spreading, hearts were breaking. Good men in their despair looked up to heaven in prayer

that the Promised One might come. In their extremity He must come, for there was no other who could save.

This sad situation is described for us in clear, terse brevity in these words: "To Seth, to him also was born a son; and he called his name Enosh (Frailty). Then it was begun to call upon the name of Jehovah," (*i. e.,* "the One who is to come") Genesis *4*:26. We cannot fail to feel the throbbing yearning of those hearts, and to hear their call for Jehovah. This is the Messianic note, which is always being sounded throughout the Old Testament.

5. Once more this hope came to expression in those ancient days. The times were very bad, and men were very evil. Lemech, the ninth generation from Adam, felt the heavy pressure of the accumulated woe that came with sin. He and his age were weary. It seemed to him that if ever the Promised Seed were to come, He must come soon, before hurrying ruin should overtake the world.

He gave expression to the sore need and the cherished hope at the birth of his son: "And he called his name Noah (meaning Rest), saying, This very one shall comfort us from our work and from the toil of our hands, because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed," Gen. *5*:29. Lemech, like Eve, was both right and wrong. He was right in holding fast to the faith in the Prom-

ised Seed. But he was mistaken, like his great-great-grandmother, in the particular time and person of the fulfillment. The "rest" came; but it was not that for which he had looked. God gave the earth ease from man's corruption and violence in the cleansing waters of the flood. But Noah was saved, to bear on to other generations the hope of the coming of the true Saviour and Comforter.

There is evident similarity in all of these expressions of hope for the future. The defeat and the curse came upon the family. In its members the family suffered. But the deliverance is also to come through the family, and the hope of it is always expressed in family terms. The seed, or son, of the family will be its Saviour. Of Kings, Priests, Prophets, they knew not, and Messianic promises in such terms would have meant nothing to them. God comforted them with a promise, the figure of which came out of their home life.

For a moment, let us pause in reverence to marvel at the harmony and accuracy of Scripture.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE AGE OF THE PATRIARCHS

WITH the flood there came a notable transition in world affairs. The Old had passed away; all was made New. Through its waters we pass from the ancient world into modern conditions. The same peoples and races, which we know now, began then to spread over and rule the earth. Geographical boundaries and localities were much the same then as now. The flood was a water highway from the old ages into our modern world.

With Abraham, certainly, modern history begins; modern in the sense that the geography, customs, nations, languages, religions, of his time still continue on the earth. The libraries of his day have been recovered. Every place of importance in his pilgrimages is known and marked. The dominant religions of the earth claim him as "Father Abraham." Men keep vigil to day by the known sepulcher of the Patriarch and his loved dead. We shall expect to find in this new age clearer and more frequent expressions of the Messianic hope. It will be more elaborate in the details of each passage, besides appropriating for its purpose a variety of figures and symbols. Again, from this age we must limit consideration to a few of the well-known passages, selecting

those which seem to be most characteristic and most important.

1. *The Blessing of Noah,* in Genesis 9:25-27, is the first of these which meets us in the narrative after the flood. Two noteworthy features claim attention: first, there is an outline list of modern nations, in germ here, and more fully developed in the following chapter. It is not the primitive family of the ancient days, with which we have to do here, but restless, ambitious, growing nations. The future hope will now take the form of national aspiration and election. Like our own world since the European War, the old world after the flood entered upon an era of vigorous nationalism. The Messianic promise will yield itself to this phase. In Noah's vision of the future the race of Ham, or Canaan, toward the South will soon lose its leadership and pass into a vassal group. Young Japheth will take for himself the largest territory, spreading north and west. Shem, the firstborn, in the center between his brothers, receives the special blessing.

Secondly, this blessing of Shem takes the form of religious eminence in the earth. The line of his descendants will hold as their special privilege the preservation and final realization of the Promise. His part in the blessing of his father would seem odd and inadequate, but for its meaning in Messianic value. Noah does not say "the blessing be upon Shem," but "blessed be the God of

Shem." His pre-eminence will be found in God's presence with him, and in the Divine purpose that his posterity shall have pre-eminence, as the channel through which the Messianic hope will pass to its fulfillment.

2. If Noah's blessing, in keeping with the new age, was altogether national, or racial, in character, in the call and blessing of Abraham we shall find this nationalism in general modified by notable personal elements. These new elements will be inalienable parts of the Abrahamic relation to the promise through all time. This call and blessing of Abraham, found in Genesis *12*:1-3, is commonly known as the covenant which God made with Abraham. These new features deserve careful consideration:

(1) This new promise is identified with the ancient promise made to the family of Eve by the use of the word "seed" which was the characteristic figure in the promise of old. Abraham, then, will carry on, where Eve and Lemech had to give over. And so Abraham is given to understand that he must gather up the broken thread of the past by the words, "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (parallel of Gen. *12*:3 in *22*:18). In the vision of Jacob (Gen. *28*:14), the words of *12*:3 and *22*:18 are combined: "in thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

(2) The promised blessing required, toward its realization, self-denial and surrender: "get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." In this respect it is not different from the call to follow Christ: "leave all and follow me"; "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself."

(3) It involved a life of journeying by faith. The goal would always be ahead, never attained; but the unfailing Divine Presence would be assured. It was to be a long journey through the ages for Abraham and his posterity, but God would always be with them in the journey.

(4) The Promise was perpetual, to all generations. In the days of sin and apostasy long afterward, God could not forget His covenant with Abraham. An often repeated phrase in the later history, "which I sware unto Abraham," always pointed back to this promise of Genesis *12*. See Jeremiah *33*:23-26, for a reaffirmation of this promise, spoken in darkest days.

(5) The most distinctive feature of this promise is its world purpose. It consecrated Abraham and his successors to a world cause. The missionary obligation was as imperative for him as for the disciples of our Lord, for the great loving purpose of God for all men is shown in the words, "be thou a blessing" and "in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Israel failed from beginning to end of his history to realize

this. His fatal blunder was to suppose that his election of God was for a narrow national end. Israel as a nation failed to see and follow the world vision; therefore, the kingdom had to be taken from him and given to another which would bring forth the fruits thereof. God's gracious purpose for all the world is clearly seen in this original covenant promise to Abraham. Here in these earliest chapters we have laid bare before us the missionary motive of the Bible. Because the sons of Shem would not see this, Japheth has come into his tents.

This covenant with Abraham for the future was repeated and reaffirmed in many subsequent passages of the Pentateuch. It became the major theme of the later history. Some of these renewals are found: in the promise of posterity through Ishmael, chapter *15*; the promise of a son to barren Sarah, *17*; after the offering of Isaac, *22;* the promise to Isaac in Philistia, *26*; Isaac's blessing of Jacob, *27*; Jacob at Bethel fleeing from Esau, *28*; Jacob on the way to Egypt, *46*; and in the call of Moses to bring Israel out of Egypt, Exodus *3* and *6*. In the nation's history, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms are to be found innumerable references and appeals to this promise. It became, and continued to be, the outstanding expression of Messianic hope in the Old Testament.

Paul's appeal to it justifies all that we have just written: "and the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, in thee shall all the nations be blessed," Galatians *3*:8.

In all of the reaffirmations of the original blessing of Abraham in Genesis *12*, it is especially noticeable that all hold fast their connection with that original blessing by repeating one or more of its phrases. Isaac, blessing Jacob, repeats the promise of national importance, by emphasis on the nationalistic phase: "let peoples serve thee, and nations bow down to thee." He also quotes the curse and blessing of *12*:3, almost in the very words. At Bethel, Genesis *28*, the "seed," or posterity, is emphasized: "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The promise, with both obligation and blessing, was one and the same through ages, showing us again the unbroken unity of Scripture.

3. The Messianic Promise contained in the blessing of Judah, Genesis *49*:10, has always arrested attention. It is a bright stellar point in the ancient celestial expanse. The reading of it will quite justify this unceasing interest, which all generations have found in it:

> "The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
> Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,
> Until Shiloh come;
> And unto him shall the obedience of the people be."

The rendering "lawgiver" of the accepted version is more accurate and intelligible than the far-fetched "ruler's staff" of the revised. Central in the interest and importance of this verse is the word "Shiloh," and in its right interpretation will be found the key to the meaning of the prophecy.

There are several different ways in which it has been explained:

(1) It refers to a person, known by this name, a name which bears a special Messianic meaning. It is then supposed to be derived from the same root, *shalem* in Hebrew, as that from which Solomon and "peace" are formed. The phrase could then be written, "until peace come" or "until he who brings peace shall come." "This Man shall be called our Peace," as it is written in another place (Micah *5*:5).

The difficulty with this interpretation is that "Shiloh" is not a logical derivative of *shalem,* even though Isaiah does make such a play upon the word in Is. *8*:6, which word, however, will be found to have a very different root derivation from the "Shiloh" of Gen. *49*:10. It may be added to this, that neither in the context of the verse, nor anywhere in the history of the times, is there a word to justify the thought of such a derivation. This interpretation is not ancient nor entertained at any time by the Jews, but is of quite recent origin.

(2) "Shiloh" has been understood by many as having reference to the town in Ephraim, where the Tabernacle was erected after the conquest of Canaan by Israel. Then we must read: "the scepter shall not depart from Judah . . . until (the religious center at) Shiloh come." This is both nonsensical, if called prophecy, and untrue if called history. Judah did not lead Israel up to the time of the Tabernacle's erection at Shiloh. Nor could any one at any time see aught of the prophetic, or of the covenant, in such an empty phrase.

(3) Another interpretation bases itself upon the same understanding of the word as in the preceding view. In this case the meaning is not until the people come to Shiloh, but that the coming to Shiloh will be the guarantee of Judah's leadership. Judah will lead until the coming to Shiloh, which in turn will be the warrant of his continuing leadership. But Judah did not come to headship of the nation until long after Shiloh's privilege, as the central sanctuary, had passed away. "Shiloh" as a place was meaningless for Jacob's time and untrue in the days when the Tabernacle was at Shiloh. At no point in all Old Testament history would such a rendering mean anything to any one.

(4) Let us examine the text itself, to follow its leadings. So unusual and difficult are its words, especially Shiloh, that from the earliest days many

corrections and additions have been suggested. We find that in the majority of the ancient manuscripts and versions the Hebrew word is not "Shiloh" at all, but quite another word. The third consonant, "h" of the word for the town, is not found in these texts, where the word exactly transliterated is *"shîlô."* In all probability it is composed of the relative pronoun *she,* joined to the preposition *l* plus the third personal pronoun, together making *lô.* This is a very common construction in Hebrew poetry (and Jacob's blessing is a poem), the connection usually being made by doubling the "l" of the second part, making *shellô.* It was equally good Hebrew, however, instead of doubling the consonant of the affixed word, to lengthen the vowel of the *she.* In this case the result would be precisely the word of the text, *shîlô,* meaning "which belongs to him," or "to whom."

This, then, would be the possible, even probable, reading, meeting every difficulty of text and context:

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,
Until the One to whom it belongs shall come,
And unto Him shall be the expectation of the people."

In this simple and natural meaning of this verse, containing and carrying onward the substance of the original promise, all generations

have looked to it as a message of Messiah, fulfilled to the letter when Christ came, born of the House of Judah.

4. A passage from this period deserves brief consideration because of references to it in later centuries. It is found in Exodus *4*:22-23: "Thus saith Jehovah (to Pharaoh), Israel is my son, my first-born; and I have said unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me."

A statement quite similar to this is found in II Samuel *7*:14, where the promise to David is given in terms of his son and successor: "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." Here, in the second passage, the nation, as Jehovah's son in Exodus, has given way to the more personal conception as the Son of David, which remained the chief expression of the One who should come, until Christ indeed did come.

Hosea quotes and illuminates these words of Exodus as he enlarges upon the tenderness of Jehovah: "when Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. I taught Ephraim to walk," Hosea *11*:1-2. And Matthew came to the full prophetic understanding of Exodus, David and Hosea, when he recorded the complete fulfillment in the flight of Joseph and Mary, with the young child, to Egypt: "out of Egypt did I call my Son" (Matt. *2*:15).

5. The institution of the Passover belongs also to this period. It is impossible to study here in

detail the history of its origin, and its most characteristic features. So many of these have been filled with rich meaning in Jesus Christ, which otherwise they could never have received. Some of these are: the tenth day of the month, our Palm Sunday; a lamb without spot or blemish; the bitter herbs of trial; the sprinkled blood.

In the New Testament the prophetic parallels are too frequent for consideration, or even hurried enumeration. Christ connected His atoning death directly with the Passover: "My blood which is shed for you." John the Baptist hailed Jesus as the Lamb of God. The devotion of the Jews through the centuries to the observance of the Passover was the Divine way of leading them down the ages to its fulfillment. Only their eyes were holden, that they could not see Him, as did Paul, when he wrote, "our Passover also has been sacrificed for us, even Christ." Peter also understood this, when he wrote, "as of a lamb without spot or blemish."

CHAPTER SIX

THE DAYS OF THE JUDGES

IN this period extending from Moses to Samuel, we find an increasing richness of Messianic reference, in every case adapting itself to, or making itself real in terms of, the new figures and events of the age. As Messiah was visible to Eve's eye of faith in the figure of her offspring, so the new age will use its own needs and experiences to phrase and visualize the everlasting hope.

This is the time of the giving of the Law, and the Law abounds in references, direct, indirect and typical, to Christ. In evidence of this there is a book of the New Testament which deals largely with the message of prophecy in the laws, sacrifices and legal personages. This is the Epistle to the Hebrews, which, however, is not alone in this respect, for such interpretations of the Old Testament institutions abound in all parts of the New Testament. Allusion has already been made (chapter five, 5) to the Passover. Equally evident are the New Testament conception and uses of the whole burnt offering, sin and trespass offerings, office and duties of the high priest, the Day of Atonement, the year of jubilee, tabernacle appointments, and many other parts of the Law, which find their ultimate significance in Christ. He Himself "began with Moses" to interpret to

them "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

In the letter to the Hebrews the author uses five words as descriptive of the fulfillment in Christ of the sacrifices, ceremonies and persons of the Law:

(1) *Likeness,* which was used to draw the parallel between the priesthood of Melchizedec, and that of Christ, Heb. *7*:15.

(2) *Copy,* found in Hebrews *8*:5, *9*:23, signifying "tokens" or "intimations," as descriptive of the Messianic purpose in the laws for gifts, and for the cleansing of vessels.

(3) *Type,* of the Tabernacle in Heb. *8*:5, "see that thou make all things according to the *pattern* (*tupos* in the Greek) that was showed thee in the mount"; and as its opposite:

(4) *Antitype* in Heb. *9*:24, descriptive of "the holy places made with hands," which are figures or patterns of "the true" and heavenly places into which Christ Himself has entered.

The *type,* which means literally a form or figure or a model, from a verb with the primitive idea of to beat or to mark, and its counterpart *antitype,* have had many interpretations, perhaps losing in the confusion of exegetical and doctrinal differences much of their simple and direct meaning. It is best to take them in the usage for which our own language has taken them over from the Greek. Mosaic laws and things were the type,

the cast or carved forms, from which the message of the everlasting Gospel would be stamped upon the page of revelation. The type corresponded to, and prepared for, the final setting forth of the true. So the letter to the Hebrews teaches, continuously through its chapters.

(5) *Shadow,* the last of these descriptive words, is easy of interpretation and vivid in illustrative effect. It is found in Heb. *8*:5; *10*:1, and also in Col. *2*:17. Levitical priests serve unto the shadow of heavenly things; and the Law is, not itself the true substance, but only the shadow of the things to come.

Every one knows what a shadow is. It is the sign and proof of a reality; it is the intimation of the approach of the substance, which it foreshadows or forecasts. A shadow passes over the placid surface of the water or over the smooth green sward. We turn our eyes upward to find what substance it represents, or heralds to us, and we see the cloud, or bird with spread wings. So the Hebrew knew that the forms of his law were not the finality. Beyond their dim meaning, their shadow, faith grasped and held the substance of the promise.

Two of these shadows, or types, of things to come, found in the books of the Law, can well be used here as illustrations. The first is the intercession of Moses for Israel, Exodus *32*:31-32. When Moses came down from the mount and

found the people returned to idolatry, his anger burned so that he broke the precious tables of stone, and called for vengeance on the sinners. But after much blood had flowed, and time for quieting of his impatient anger had passed, his father-heart was moved with pity for a people who were to him as his own children. His tender intercession for them before Jehovah, "if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book, which Thou has written," remains as one of the notable waymarks of the Old Testament pilgrimage. It is life for life, his life given for his people, to win back life for them; an intimation, or a type, of the great Atonement. But Moses was not adequate for the great sacrifice, for he himself was a sinner, and not a lamb without spot or blemish. Therefore, his offer was passed over, and Jehovah said, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out from My book." Nevertheless, his noble offer yet stands as the clearest Old Testament type of Christ's voluntary sacrifice; and we can well understand how "He began with Moses" to teach men of Himself.

The second type, or foreshadowing, of Christ's sacrifice is the brazen serpent of Numbers *21*. When the punishment through the serpents, fiery in sting and like brass or copper in appearance, had brought the rebellious and discontented people to their senses and to their knees, Moses was

directed to make a brazen image of the poisonous serpent, and raise it up where all could see. The bitten victim, looking to it in faith, would live.

Perhaps one marvels that the cause of their woe should be chosen as the symbol of their salvation; that the thing they abhorred, should become to them the visible object of faith. But this is quite in harmony with the Bible method. The word in the Old Testament for the sin and for the sin offering was the same. Sin could not be put away except by sin, that is, through one appointed and able to bear the penalty and make the expiation. Such is the heart of meaning in Paul's remarkable words, "Him who knew no sin, God made sin (offering) for us" (II Cor. *5*). "According to the law, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. *9*:22).

Christ Himself took this type of the serpent, as the ancient object of faith, and raised it in His own words to Messianic significance: "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life," John *3*:14-15.

The next message for our consideration is the prophecy of Israel's future, spoken by Balaam, the pagan prophet, a man of mystery, in a less degree like Melchisedec. His home appears to have been by the river Euphrates, Numbers *22*:5,

and possibly he belonged to the order of the Magi, whose business was the preservation of all accumulated wisdom, and the handing of it on to other generations of initiates into their order. They were much concerned with observation of the heavens; so Balaam will speak in terms of stars, just as the Wise Men of New Testament times will see the star of the Christ, while watching the heavens in their eastern home.

After Balaam, on Balak's invitation, had arrived in Moab, to curse the Israelites then spread abroad over hillside and valley, and waiting to cross over the Jordan, Balak took him in succession to three peaks, from which he could look out on the tents and hosts of Israel. Sacrifices were offered on each height in preparation for the vision and curse. But in each case a blessing, not a curse, was spoken by the prophet. Balak in hot anger dismissed Balaam, bidding him hurry back to his own land. But before he departed, turning upon the Moabite king, he delivered the Messianic prophecy, which has made his name to be remembered down through the ages:

"I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not nigh:
There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
And a scepter shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite through the corners of Moab,
And break down all the sons of Sheth."
—Numbers *24*:17.

Balaam could see the Israelites swarming over valleys and plateaus. It was not of them as a nation that he spoke, but of one "not now" and "not nigh." This personage of his prophecy should come forth and rise out of Israel, and therefore be distinct from the nation. He shall be a king, as both symbols, star and scepter, indicate. And he will establish a kingdom which will triumph not only over Moab, but extend its power over all the nations around, and finally prevail from the isles of the Greeks to the far mountains of Assyria.

In those days of nationalism the king of Moab was aspiring and planning for the ascendancy of his people far and wide. But Israel's invasion had broken into those plans. So arose an occasion for prophecy to open up its vision of the coming kingdom of David, and, beyond that, of the kingdom of the Divine Son of David.

The Messianic hope was never to lose this sign of the star, as one of the cherished representations of the coming King. The Wise Men said, "We have seen His star." In Revelation the Risen Lord still holds fast to this symbol of His appearing, when he says: "I am the bright and morning star." Peter also kept it in remembrance, as his words, "until the daystar appear," declare to us.

The most important national personage of the period of the Judges was the prophet. The

judges themselves were really understood to be prophets, and were often so designated. This age began with Moses, the great judge, the founder of the prophetic line, and ends with Samuel, the last judge to be official ruler over Israel. In harmony with this fact, and true to the spirit and method of prophecy, we find that one of the great Messianic messages of this age was given under the prophetic figure.

In the book of Deuteronomy, chapters *17* and *18,* are concerned with ordinances for the officials of the nation, who are to direct its various affairs after the entrance into Canaan. They are given in the order of King, Priest and Prophet. Moses himself being their prophet, this office is considered last of the three.

Moses knew quite well the wayward heart of the people, and the danger of apostasy and idolatry after he should be taken from them. In his distress over the prospective danger, Jehovah comforted him with these words: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him," Deut. *18*:18.

Here we have the beginning, by Divine institution, of the so-called "line of the prophets," not later with Samuel as is often supposed. The meaning of the promise is that in days of doubt and danger, when hard-pressed by invasion from

without, or threatened by unfaithfulness and corruption from within, a prophet will be raised up to teach, guide and deliver. As Moses had taught and warned, so in the crises of after years, God's prophetic messenger would come among them. His voice would often vibrate with the deep notes of warning; it might also still their anxious hearts with tender tones of comfort. The promise was kept faithfully by Jehovah, who sent His prophets in every age. Of this line were Samuel, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all their goodly company.

But the promise went beyond these noble men. It had its final goal, toward which all other temporal fulfillments served only as resting places along the onward way. We speak of "the line of the prophets." A line must have an end as well as a beginning. If this one is tied to Moses at one end, it is also bound to Christ at the other, who spoke as never man spoke. The New Testament plainly declares the final completion of the prophetic line in Christ, in the words of the apostles to the crowd attracted by the healing of the cripple at the temple gate: "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren. Unto you first God, having raised up His Servant, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities," Acts *3*:22-26.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PERIOD OF THE KINGS

IT is not necessary to subdivide this general period in accordance with the historical schisms or exiles. The special features of Messianic expression in this period originate with David, and do not change to any marked degree down to its end. David is the Messianic figure of the age. With him comes a great advance in the form of Messianic expectation. He is the key to the new forms and ideals, which are henceforth to characterize the promise.

From any and every point of view David is an interesting character. He was the best beloved person in all Hebrew history. More space in this history is given to him than to any other of the great heroes of the Old Testament. He brought the jealous tribes of Israel, as no other man could do, into a united nation. He was a father to his people, and they in turn requited his love with their own devotion in his day, and have cherished him in memory in all ages since. All generations of Jew and Gentile have regarded David as the ideal of kingliness.

The Scriptures describe him as "a man after God's own heart." This phrase does not mean that David was a righteous man, or perfect in heart; for this evidently he was not. But he

loved God. He was the friend of Jehovah, with a passion for His glory. His royal position was a trust from his God, with whom he shared a close friendship. David built no new cities, nor outpost fortresses, nor magnificent palaces; his ruling passion was to gain and save toward one end: the building of a temple for Jehovah, which would be worthy of the Eternal Lord of the Universe.

We must not overlook the fact that David was a child of his age, an age of sensualism. Philistine influence encouraged, and Philistine oppression fostered this materialism. David often fell under its spell, indulging in sins which brought shame to himself and reproach upon his religion. But he did not fail and fall away forever as did Samson and Saul, children like himself of an age of spiritual dullness and sensuous urge. His Psalms often give expression to the hand-to-hand battle which he was always waging against his carnal nature. No doubt he conquered because of the Messianic expectation, which always seemed real and near to him. "I have set Jehovah," he said, "always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved," Psalm *16*:8.

Such a man must of necessity become a vehicle of Messianic expression, a notable torch-bearer in the long procession of hope. We have seen that in the preceding ages this hope adapted itself to every age and condition; that it took the form most characteristic of each age, and the color of

its immediate environment. To Eve it was seed, or son; to Abraham homeland and posterity; to Moses the ever present prophet. So with David, the great and good king, the hope of Israel will take to itself royal purple and golden crown.

The most popular and most used Messianic titles come from this age and from association with David. These are "The Anointed," a translation of Messiah; and the "Son of David." Four centuries after David Jeremiah declared that Jehovah's covenant with David could not be broken, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne. A thousand years later Bartimaeus will hail the Messiah in the same Davidic phrase, "thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

This period furnishes for our working a rich lode of Messianic ore. In considering it, two parts of the Davidic literature claim attention.

The first of these is Jehovah's covenant with David, recorded in II Samuel 7. After David had rest from his enemies, he purposed in his heart to build a house for Jehovah, which would be worthy of Him, and glorify Him in all the earth. The old sanctuary at Shiloh had long been ruined, and the Ark was a pilgrim with temporary housing. The king said: "I dwell in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God dwelleth within curtains." He confided his plan to his friend Nathan, who on the spot gave his hearty approval. David's

words to Nathan, not recorded in the narrative here, are preserved for us in Psalm *132*:

"Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house,
Nor go up into my bed;
I will not give sleep to mine eyes,
Or slumber to mine eyelids;
Until I find out a place for Jehovah,
A tabernacle for the Mighty One of Jacob."

But at night Nathan received a message from Jehovah bidding him tell David that he must not build the house. After he sleeps with his fathers, his son who succeeds him shall build it.

But Jehovah takes the occasion and the idea of building to assure to David the fulfillment of the Messianic hope in his line. Verses eleven to sixteen of this chapter, which contain the core of its covenant promise to David, are as follows:

"Jehovah will make thee a house. When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed from thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be My son: if he commit iniquity, I will chastise him with the rod of man, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my loving kindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy

kingdom shall be made sure forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever."

The Old Testament uses the phrase "to build a house" in two quite distinct senses, each with equal frequency. It may refer to the erection of a material dwelling, or to the founding of a family in Israel. For example, the Israelites built store-cities for the Egyptians, while God built households for the faithful midwives.

This double meaning of the phrase is used with singular effectiveness here. David said, "I will build a house (a temple) to Jehovah." Jehovah said to David, "Shalt thou build a house for me?" Nay, but "I will build for thee a house" (an enduring posterity). Saul had craved to found a royal house in Israel, his children after him to sit on his throne. This became a selfish obsession with him, and the fear that noble and popular David would frustrate his ambition drove him to madness. But David, whose supreme passion was for Jehovah's throne, and for His glory in all the earth, for him Jehovah Himself will build an everlasting house, and make the throne of his Son to endure forever.

This remarkable episode in David's life, we may call it the highpoint in his history, could never be forgotten. It became the sure and steadfast anchor to which his people held fast in the stormy days, which were to come.

In the dark days for the nation, when foreign invasion brought them to the verge of ruin, and their enemies exulted over them, because Jehovah seemed to have cast them off, Psalm *89*:38-45, the psalmist turned his heart back to the covenant with David. But the words of II Samuel *7* find a new and richer meaning in the interpretation and application of Psalm *89*. For the psalmist the historical David was gone, and his successors were unworthy. But he seems to look for another, a prophetic David, one of whom the King David of olden days was so clear a type, a Messianic David, upon whom help may be laid as on one that is mighty. Words of this Psalm added in the midst of its quotations from II Samuel *7* arrest attention:

"He shall say unto me, Thou art my Father,
My God, and the rock of my salvation.
I also will make him my firstborn,
The highest of the kings of the earth.
My loving kindness will I keep for him for evermore:
And my covenant shall stand fast with him.
His seed also will I make to endure forever,
And his throne as the days of heaven."

Such words as these forbid in themselves fulfillment in David, or in any merely human son of David. They lead the mind directly to a King of Kings on an eternal throne, with an ageless dominion. Unless they have been realized in the Christ, the Son of God, the covenant with David

has been broken, and we must change the words of Scripture, which would then be true no longer: "God is not a man that He should lie."

This covenant of the coming Messiah, made with David, does not disannul nor forget the covenant with Eve and Abraham. It holds its close contact with them in the use of the word "seed," which was so characteristic of them: "I will set up *thy seed* after thee, and I will establish his kingdom." The seed of the woman, which shall defeat the serpent; and the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations will be blessed, now becomes the Son of David, a royal person, whose throne is everlasting. The hope is now more specific, and henceforth will hold to this definite form. But we do not fail to see that He is still the promised "seed" of the ancient days, the first and only hope of men.

Associated with the Messianic promise to David is an interesting prophetic phrase, found more than once in the Scriptures, "the sure mercies of David," found in Isaiah *55*:3, and quoted of Christ by Paul in Acts *13*:34. Isaiah, in his gospel invitation, tells his people, who are under chastisement, that if they will repent and return unto the Lord, He will make an everlasting covenant with them, which will be nothing else than a revival of the Davidic covenant, "even the sure mercies of David." Isaiah refers the fulfillment to the future, when it shall include both

Jew and Gentile, "behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a prince and commander to the peoples." And Paul interprets this of Jesus, risen from the dead, in proof of "the holy and sure mercies of David."

If language has any meaning, if hope is ever to have realization, then the words of the Davidic covenant, as found in II Samuel *7* and Psalm *89,* lead inevitably to Jesus Christ, the Son of David, and the Son of God. Read again the words of the inspired psalmist, writing long after David, who was buried, and whose tomb was with them at that day:

> "My covenant will I not break,
> Nor alter the things that is gone out of my lips.
> Once have I sworn by my holiness,
> I will not lie unto David:
> His seed shall endure forever,
> And his throne as the sun before me."

Of whom in all the ages could this be true, but of Jesus, Son of David, and Son of God!

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE MESSIAH OF THE PSALMS

THE second part of the Davidic literature (see page 69), which has rich Messianic value is the Book of Psalms. Not all of these, to be considered in this chapter, are of Davidic authorship. But they are based upon the new conception of the Messianic promise, made to David, which was under consideration in the preceding chapter.

We would be surprised indeed not to find the Christ, who is present everywhere in the Old Testament, also in the Psalms, the best beloved book of the Hebrews. In it we find the sincerest and highest expression of their religious experience, and of both national and individual yearning. In this book the believing and hoping Israelite of old has exposed to us the inmost secrets of his heart. It was the hymn book of the nation, in which they mingled their hearts and voices in the expression of religious emotions common to them all. Would we see the faith of the Hebrews at its clearest and best, then we turn instinctively to the outpouring of their hearts in the Psalms.

We shall find, as we expected, that this book abounds in expressions of faith in Christ, and longing for Him. The introduction to the whole book indicates this. The first and second psalms,

being without titles of any kind, seem to have been placed at the beginning of the book, to indicate the general nature of its content. The first psalm has as its theme the Law of the Lord; the theme of the second is the Messiah, "concerning Jehovah and His Messiah," or "Anointed One." In this way we are informed that the whole book will deal largely with the Law and the Messiah, we might say, with Moses and the Prophets. By lack of time and space we are forced to limit ourselves to the study of a very few of such psalms. It must be remembered that there are many besides, which are bearers of the Messianic hope.

1. The second psalm, because of its evident Messianic character, has been called the "King's Psalm." There are many other psalms which have to do with the king and the kingdom, but the second is in a special way King Messiah's psalm.

It is written in the form of a drama, in four scenes, a different *persona dramatis* appearing in each scene. Each scene covers three verses of the psalm as found in our English translations.

In the first scene the rebel nations and their rulers are presented as rushing like a mob upon the stage, and then seating themselves in council, to decide whether they will submit to the discipline of Jehovah and His Messiah. The decision seems to be, "we will not have this man to reign over us." It is absurd that frail man can discuss or

dispute the sovereign claims of the Lord's anointed.

Therefore, the second scene, verses 4-6, introduces the Lord, the Sovereign One, as laughing at the folly of such pride and rebellion, and affirming that the Messiah King shall rule securely in Zion.

In the third scene Messiah Himself appears, without any words of historical introduction, but delivering a message of promise, in the three verses, 7-9, which the inspired poet assigns to Him. As these words are the Messianic heart of the psalm, they may well be quoted:

"Let Me tell again and again the decree of Jehovah:
He said to me, My Son art Thou:
This day have I begotten Thee.
Ask of Me, and I will give Thee nations for Thy birthright,
And the ends of the earth for thy right of conquest."

Messiah came speaking, not His own words, but the words of the Father, who sent Him. "The words that I say unto you, I speak not from myself. And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me," John *14*:10, 24.

The last scene introduces the author himself, who in the epilogue of the drama appeals to the rebels to accept the authority of Messiah. "Kiss the Son," he says, in token of sincere allegiance to Him.

This psalm is quoted in the New Testament oftener than any other, for it was regarded by

the early Christians as surely written of Jesus. Paul quotes the words, "this day have I begotten thee," in his sermon at Antioch, as fulfilled in the Resurrection, Acts *13*:34; and makes a similar reference in Rom. *1*:4, "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." Twice in Hebrews the psalm is quoted as written of Christ, *1*:5; *5*:8. And in Acts *4*:25, the disciples, praying together in the Upper Room, quote the words "the Lord and His Anointed" of Jesus Christ.

Besides many other quotations, the New Testament use of the psalm is most noticeable in that it takes two of the names of the Messiah of this psalm as titles of Jesus the Lord. These are "Christ" and "the Son of God," found so often in the New Testament. Ancient Jewish and ancient Christian churches were agreed in holding fast to this psalm, placed at the gateway to the Psalm Book, as distinctively a Messianic message.

2. Psalm *8* is quoted in the Letter to the Hebrews as having reference to Christ, "thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." The quotation is made from the Greek translation, which is different from the Hebrew in one important point. In the Hebrew we should read, "thou hast made him to lack little from God." David, on the earth, in lowly reverence, was looking up from frail man toward God. To him the wonder of Divine grace is that God has lifted

man up, close to Himself, above the angels even, who hold a midway point. To the author of the Letter to the Hebrews, who is looking downward from the Divine heights, where the Son was seated at the right hand of the Father, the marvel of Divine grace is that He should become man, and the Son of Man, and be brought lower than the angels, to the plane of frail man. The psalm and its quotation in Hebrews take an added beauty, when we consider the difference in the point of view of the two authors. If David marvelled that frail man should be so lifted up as to become Jehovah's vice-regent in the earth, ascending higher than angels; so the New Testament writer marvelled that the Divine Son should be so humbled as to become man, descending *lower* than the angels.

3. Psalm *16* claims our attention, because it was used by Peter, in his sermon at Pentecost, as prophetic of the resurrection of Christ. It is one of the oldest of the psalms, and greatly beloved as its title, *Michtam,* probably meaning "golden," would indicate.

It is a review by David of his past life, in which he denounces idolatry and idolaters, and maintains his devotion to Jehovah, as his all. The psalm begins in the second person, "Thou hast said," David thus writing as though his soul were speaking. It might, therefore, be called "the psalm of the soul," and in harmony with this the

peroration has to do with the soul, for "Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol."

In looking back over his life David is impressed by God's constant goodness. "The lines have fallen to him in pleasant places." Every enemy has been conquered and every danger survived. But the greatest enemy is yet to be met. In his old age David faced the hour of supreme need, when he must enter into combat with death. The issue is for him sure victory, for the Divine Friend, who has stood by him in all life's perils, will not desert him in the time of greatest peril. Victory over death and immortality are necessary consequences of friendship with Jehovah; so in confidence the psalmist could sing:

"Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol,
Neither wilt thou suffer thy beloved one to see corruption.
Thou wilt show me the endless path of life."

The immediate message of these words is the assurance of the immortality of the soul. But in Hebrew thought immortality involved the welfare of the body also, and so presupposed the resurrection. David also was speaking not for himself only; but also for the deathless seed which Jehovah had promised in the covenant with him. This son of his, this glorious Heir, could not be holden of death. And in this sense Peter appeals to the psalm at Pentecost:

"The patriarch being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he should set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was He left to Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption."

That the psalmist has in mind not only the hope of immortality for the soul, but also the resurrection of the body, is seen in those words of the psalm, too generally passed over in interpretation: "even *my flesh* shall dwell in confidence."

4. Another of the "King's Psalms" is the forty-fifth, which is unique in origin, and of a great Messianic interest. It is an allegory, taking a local event of wide interest as the illustration of a more glorious event of spiritual meaning. The historical event which the psalm commemorates was the royal marriage of Jehoram, prince of Judah, and Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and "grand-daughter of Tyre." The real purpose of the psalm is, through the use of an event of uncommon interest, to draw attention to a spiritual fact of deeper meaning: the union between the Messiah King and His church.

The psalm is composed of three divisions, or odes: an ode to inspiration, verses 1-5; secondly, an ode in praise of the Messianic King under the symbol of the Judæan prince, verses 6-9; and

finally, an ode to the Church, or Kingdom, using as symbol the princess, or bride.

We are concerned particularly with the second part of the psalm, the verses which describe the Messianic King:

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever;
A scepter of equity is the scepter of Thy kingdom.
Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee
With the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

These are strange words to be spoken of a mere man; and no Jew could have found it possible to make such a statement, ascribing Deity to man. Various evasions of this apparent contradiction have been offered. Some would render: "The throne of God is forever"; others understand it to mean "thy throne is from God"; or "thy throne is of God," that is, founded on God. Still others would ascribe the first of these verses, the sixth of the psalm, to God; the words descriptive of the prince beginning with verse 7.

But all of these explanations are evasive, not candid. They are unitarian in sentiment, fearing the simple, straight rendering and acceptance of the words. This natural rendering is that of our version and of all ancient versions, accepted also by the ancient Jewish interpreters, who acknowledged the Messianic nature of the awe-stirring words, "Thy throne, O God."

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews in his argument for the Deity of Jesus quotes these words as those of the Father to His Son:

> "Of the Son, he (God) saith,
> Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever,"

so recognizing and underwriting their Messianic meaning in Jesus.

5. Psalm *72* is David's farewell blessing. It has the peculiarity of having two different titles, one at the head of the psalm, ascribing it to Solomon, and another at the end, including it among "the prayers of David." This apparent contradiction has the simplest possible harmony in the supposition that David uttered these words as his dying blessing on Solomon, who, in the zeal of the faith of his early years, committed them to immortal verse.

But whether spoken by David or Solomon, the great words of the psalm cannot be adequately explained, either in the reign of David or of Solomon. They describe the coming and reign of a King of Righteousness, whose dominion extends over the whole earth, and will never end. Righteousness, redemption, universal empire and endless life are the characteristics of the king heralded in this psalm. He could not have been Solomon, or any earthly king. David and Solomon in prophetic vision saw the coming and glory of the Promised One, who was David's greater Son, the King of Righteousness.

The Davidic covenant, which is the theme of Psalm 89, has already been considered in the preceding chapter, and this psalm there brought into its relation to the original record of the covenant in II Samuel *7*. We pass over it here to take up:

6. Psalm *110,* which in the New Testament was applied to Christ, as the person of whom the psalmist spoke, on two different occasions. On the first, Matthew *22*:41-46, after Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians had failed to ensnare Jesus with their wily questions, He turned and put to them a question in the words of this psalm: "What think ye of the Christ? whose son is He. They say unto Him, David's. He saith unto them, How then doth David in the Spirit call Him Lord, saying:

> The Lord said unto my Lord,
> Sit Thou on My right hand,
> Till I put thine enemies under Thy feet.

If David then calleth Him Lord, how is He his son? And no one was able to answer Him a word."

The answer might have been natural and ready enough, if they had remembered, from their Scriptures, that Jehovah had promised to David, in II Samuel *7*, Psalms *72* and *89*, a son and successor, who should also be the Son of God, have the power of an endless life, and reign over a kingdom without limit in time or space. Our Lord's question meant more than the confound-

ing of His critics; He intended it to be a declaration of His Messiahship, and proof from their own Scriptures that He is the Son of God.

The second appearance of Psalm *110* in the New Testament is to be found in the Letter to the Hebrews, in chapters *5, 6* and *7*, which quote of Christ, and interpret in detail, the words of the psalm concerning Melchisedec:

> "Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent;
> Thou art a priest forever
> After the order of Melchisedec."

In the letter to the Hebrews this prophecy is used to prove the superiority of Christ to the Levitical priests; for Abraham, grandfather of Levi, acknowledged Melchisedec's supremacy by paying tribute to him. Aaron also died and his priesthood ceased; but Melchisedec's was perpetual. The words, in which the New Testament writer describes this type of Christ, show his conception of his Messianic meaning: "being first, by interpretation, King of Righteousness, and then also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace; without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God," Hebrews *7*:2-3.

It was with such a conception of the ancient and mysterious Melchisedec, that David turned to the future, and propesied of the Promised One as an Eternal Priest. The first Messianic verse

of this psalm hails Christ as King; this second prophecy presents Him as Priest. In the reflected light of the New Testament we catch the Old Testament seer's vision of the royal and atoning Christ.

7. Psalm *118* is held in the traditions of the Jews to have been written for the dedication of the Second Temple in 516 B. C. The reasonableness of the historical tradition is well sustained by the words of the psalm, such as:

> "The voice of rejoicing and salvation
> In the tents of the righteous," verse 15;

and

> "This is the day which Jehovah hath made;
> We will rejoice and be glad in it," verse 24.

For this reason it was closely associated with festal occasions in all succeeding generations. It was greatly beloved, and found in the hearts and on the lips of all in times of Jerusalem's solemn assemblies. Twice we find it appealed to in the New Testament during our Lord's last Passover.

On the first day of that last week Jesus and His disciples left Bethany, where they had spent the Sabbath, and joined the jubilant throng, on its way into the holy city. Over Sabbath the people in the city, both residents and visitors, have heard of the nearness of the famed Galilean teacher to the city. On Sunday, expecting His arrival, the whole city was moved about Him; and when the message comes that He was ap-

proaching, a multitude went out to meet the approaching crowd of pilgrims, spreading their festal garments in the path of the Royal Pilgrim, and waving palm branches. So was celebrated the first Palm Sunday. When the two multitudes met in the valley, like the meeting of two electrically charged atmospheres in the sky, their emotions flashed into utterance; and the words of their utterance were taken from this psalm:

> "Hosanna to the Son of David:
> Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;
> Hosanna in the highest,"

which is both a quotation and an interpretation. While the Second Temple was building, the purpose of the people was kept constant by the words of the prophets that the Expected One would surely come to it, as He had not come to Solomon's. Such a hope was woven into the texture of this psalm of dedication, for which reason the hearts of the Jews turned instinctively to it at the thought of Messiah. So it became the natural vehicle for expression of their emotions on that Palm Sunday.

On another day of the festal week Christ was teaching in the temple courts by parables, and by appeal to their Scriptures; but the leaders of the nation, angered at His message, sought to make away with Him. On one of the days of this week it was the custom for children to march through the streets of the city, singing the 118th Psalm.

It may have been that their voices were heard through the temple colonnades where Jesus was teaching. Taking the words of the psalm out of the children's mouths, He turned on His opponents and said: "Did ye never read in the Scriptures,

> The stone which the builders rejected,
> The same was made the head of the corner;
> This was from the Lord,
> And it was a miracle in our eyes?"

And they understood at once that He spoke in the psalmist's words against them, and of Himself.

The incident upon which the tradition of the rejected stone rests is not certainly known. It has been associated with both Solomon's and Zerubbabel's temples. The story is, that in the erection of the temple, or near its completion, a key stone necessary to the continuance of building and successful completion was missing. As the design for the temple involved no further preparation of material after the actual erection had begun, the undertaking seemed doomed. But when the horizon of hope was black with despair, the stone, designed by the great architect, but overlooked by the builders, was brought out of the heaps of rubbish, and found to fit exactly into its place, the place which another could never fill. It is possible that this incident is the one referred to in Zechariah *4*:7-8.

Whatever may have been the occasion, the spiritual meaning is quite clear. As the building could never be completed without the one necessary stone, so the nation could never realize the Divine purpose for it, without the coming of the promised and expected One. But the One designed by the Great Architect to perfect His plan of salvation, had been rejected by them, becoming to them a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. So the psalmist and prophet wrote; and so Christ interpreted.

8. Psalm *22* in the Old Testament hymn-book was the song of the Suffering Servant of the Lord, having much in common with Isaiah *53*. Both Christ Himself and also His disciples turned to it when the shadow of the Cross fell dark upon them. The psalm is a true picture of the scene on Calvary: the staring crowd; the wagging heads; the insolent suggestion that He call on Jehovah in whom He trusted; the drawn, stretched body, so that the very bones may be counted; the pierced hands and feet; soldiers dividing and gambling for His raiment.

Our Lord Himself was thinking of this psalm, as He hung upon the Cross, as being then fulfilled. For, not in agony or despair, but in realization that the cup of bitterness was now being filled to the brim, He cried out in the words of the first verse of the psalm:

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Among the Jews it was the custom to give to a book, as its name, the first word of the book; or to give to a collection of books the name of its first book. So here our Lord by quoting the first verse of the psalm, calls the attention of all to its fulfillment in Himself. For He knew all the things written concerning Himself in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms.

It is not possible here to pursue further the many witnesses of the Psalms to Christ. It is evident that they are filled with anticipatory praises of His certain advent. When those, who were waiting for the consolation of Israel, saw Jesus, these prophetic praises became like new songs of joy to them. And ever since the coming Messiah was heralded in Psalms, His Church has been a singing church. Luke in his Gospel introduces Him with psalms, Zacharias, Mary, Simeon and the great archangel, the soloists, and the multitude of the heavenly host the supporting chorus. Interpreters may not be able to make clear to us all the mysteries of the Book of Revelation. One feature in it, however, is beyond dispute. Out of its pages we hear the voices of victors, as they sing the old song of Moses, of David, of the Lamb: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ."

CHAPTER NINE

JESUS AND THE PROPHETS

"THE Prophets" of this title and chapter are understood to be the sixteen canonical books of our English Bible, called by the Jews "the Latter Prophets." Again, our consideration must be limited to a very small fraction of the material, the rich Messianic contents of which would exceed the limits of any volume. Here in these books Christ seems ever present. The apocalyptic angel spoke in the truest sense when he said, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

In considering so wide a field of information, the classification of this information will aid our comprehension of it. The most satisfactory method for classification of the prophetical books has been according to the historical periods in which their authors lived and worked. For these men were great figures in national history, and their books bear the historical and literary marks of their times. Their messages will be cast in the forms and have the color of the age in which they fulfilled their ministry. To know them as they were and lived, will help us to understand their message.

The Jew has always been affected in thought and expression by the national and political sur-

roundings in which he found himself. In a sense the Jew never developed a civilization of his own; he lived and bore his witness among civilizations which other nations had developed. This had been so well put by G. S. Lee, we may profitably quote his words: "The Bible of the Hebrews (which had to be borrowed by the rest of the world if they were to have one) is the great outstanding fact and result of the Hebrew genius. They did not produce a civilization, but they produced a book for the rest of the world to make civilizations out of." Never for more than possibly two hundred years in all has he existed as an independent nation. He has always been a part or dependent of other nations. So in olden time he was Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek or Roman Jew, as today he is Russian, German, English or American Jew. It is natural, then, to think of his prophets in the historical relations, always descriptive of themselves.

Israel has always been under the dominion, or protectorate, of some foreign power, as Palestine of today prospers under the protectorate of Great Britain. Three foreign powers had suzerainty over Israel in the days of the prophets, Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia.

(1) The Assyrian period extended from 850 B. C. to 606 B. C. approximately. The prophets of this period were Isaiah and the first seven of the Minor Prophets, excepting perhaps Obadiah.

(2) The Babylonian period extended from about 625 B. C. to 537 B. C., during which lived Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zephaniah and Habakkuk.

(3) The Persian period began in 537 B. C. with Cyrus, and continued until the conquest of Alexander. Its prophets are Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

These prophets will show in their writings the influence of the world power of their day upon their own people. Often the Messianic message will come out of some crisis precipitated by the pressure of the dominant power upon the people's life. Isaiah and Micah, for example, cannot be fully appreciated without an understanding of the problems which the imperialism of Assyria thrust into Palestine in their day.

In the Assyrian period, Isaiah is the chief messenger of the Messianic hope. But before coming to his book there are Messianic allusions, found here and there in other prophets of this period, to which attention may be called in a hurried and outline manner.

Joel was the author of the great passage which furnished the text for Peter's sermon at Pentecost. It is not necessary to enter into the details of the age or historical occasion of this passage, since the prophecy is no wise affected by such considerations. His book is rather noncommittal as to historical setting. It may have been written

early in the Assyrian period, or at a much later time. A disaster had come upon the land, whether by an actual plague of locusts, or from an invading army symbolized by the locusts.

The call to repentance for the sins, which had brought the disaster upon them, leads the prophet to a vision of the day of forgiveness and restoration, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh, a promise which our Lord reaffirmed while on earth, and which was gloriously fulfilled after His ascension, according to His promise. Going through the New Testament we discover, as in this instance, that its notable events were recognized by the disciples, each as having been foretold or foreshadowed in their Scriptures. This unmistakable correspondence of type and message with their experience with Jesus was final proof of fulfillment in Him of their nation's age-long hope, and filled their hearts with that joy, which so abounds in the New Testament message.

The Messianic passages in Hosea and Amos are general in character, referring usually to the restoration of a united Israel under the house of David. These prophets of the Northern Kingdom would not let go their hold upon "the sure mercies of David," although their people had thrown off the temporal rule of David's sons, Hosea *3*:5; Amos *9*:11-15. Each of these passages has the phrase "in the latter days" or "in that day" always indicating the Messianic Age.

The passage in Amos is of peculiar beauty and sweetness, adorning the cherished hope of the fulfillment of the covenant with David for an everlasting kingdom and a never-dying king with the fairest pictures from nature:

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David, that is fallen,
And close up the breaches thereof:
And I will raise up its ruins,
And build it as in the days of old.
Behold the days shall come, saith Jehovah,
When the plowman shall overtake the reaper,
And the treader of grapes him that soweth seed;
And the mountains shall drop sweet wine,
And all the hills shall melt."

The description by Hosea in his closing chapter of the age of spiritual restoration, "the seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," is not less beautiful than the picture in Amos.

We turn for more detailed study to Micah's Messianic teaching. It is more specific than the other Minor Prophets of this period. Its New Testament use is of first importance. And his relation to Isaiah, as contemporary, possible understudy, and personal counterpart, gives him and his message special prominence and interest.

Micah, a Judaean, of the town of Mareshah, southwest of Jerusalem, lived about 740 to 700 B. C. The Assyrian empire was at the height of

its power. Israel had been conquered and Samaria destroyed. Jerusalem had been threatened many times. Judah was still prosperous and confident. But prosperity had brought to it, not faith and gratitude, but pride, self-assurance and sin.

In contrast with Isaiah, an aristocrat of Jerusalem and the city prophet, Micah was a peasant prophet, a country preacher. Isaiah knew kings and world politics; Micah knew the fields of grain and the sheep-fold. Isaiah's field of vision was the civilized world; Micah's horizon reached as far as the farm villages, which lay around his own Mareshah.

Nevertheless, his book is not rude nor bare, but on the contrary filled with sustained eloquence and beauty. It combines spiritual vision and exalted faith with the highest moral values. A master of interpretation has said that the highest point in Old Testament ethical attainment was reached in Micah, when he said:

> "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good,
> And what doth Jehovah require of thee,
> But to do justice, and to love kindness,
> And to humble thyself to walk with God?"
> —Micah *6*:8.

He left a lasting impression on the hearts of his people; for, more than a hundred years later, in the days of Jeremiah, his words were remembered, Jeremiah *26*:18, in a time and way, which saved that good prophet's life.

Like Amos, the prophet Micah was a preacher of admonition and judgment; but after every section of his book given to denunciation of sin and its necessary punishment, he uttered a message of hope for the future. At the end of his first section, *2*:12, we read:

> "I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee;
> I will surely gather the remnant of Israel;
> I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah,
> As a flock in the midst of their pasture."

His book closes with one of the finest Messianic notes of the Old Testament:

"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity,
And passeth over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?
He will return, He will have compassion on us;
He will tread our iniquities under foot;
And Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.
Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob,
And the loving kindness to Abraham,
Which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers
From the days of old."

One of his most notable prophecies, is almost an exact replica of Isaiah's vision of an exalted Zion become the court of righteousness and guarantor of peace for all nations, with which the latter begins the prophetic message of his book. Neither seems to have copied the passage from

the other, but each to have quoted it from an older original, a book lost to us, but from which we may well think that we have yet other quotations in our Old Testament.

Micah quotes at greater length the passage common to them both, as is shown by the lines not found in Isaiah, and clearly bracketed within the original prophecy by the concluding formula, "for the mouth of Jehovah of Hosts hath spoken it." These lines are:

> "But they shall sit every man under his vine
> And under his fig-tree;
> And none shall make them afraid."

This prophetic vision of brotherhood among all men, and consequent peace in all the earth, has not been excelled by any ideal or program of universal peace in our own day, nor in any other.

We come now to the prophecy for which Micah is best known, 5:2-5. When the Wise Men came seeking Him just born to be King of the Jews, and asked for the place of his birth, the learned men of the nation turned for the answer, not to the noble Isaiah, but to the peasant-prophet, Micah:

"But thou Bethlehem Ephrathah,
Which art little to be among the families of Judah,
Out of thee shall one come forth unto Me
That is to be a ruler in Israel;
Whose goings forth are from of old,
From everlasting.

Therefore will He give them up until the time
That she who travaileth hath brought forth;
And the residue of his brethren shall return unto the
children of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of
Jehovah,
In the majesty of the name of Jehovah his God;
And they shall abide; for now shall he be great
Unto the ends of the earth.
And this man shall be *Shalom.*"

The specific personal references in this remarkable passage will not escape the most casual reader. We shall study some of these with more care. The picture which the prophet draws for us here is of a day when there will be no king any longer over the people, the line of David physically and civilly having been put aside from ruling. Where shall Jehovah find a ruler for the new age which is to come? Remembering the choice of David in olden time, and the covenant promise to David, the prophet goes back again to Bethlehem, as Isaiah, chapter *11*:1, went back to the house of Jesse, to find there the promised Messianic Ruler. His origin, or appearance, is in the ancient times, "whose goings forth are from of old." Some take these words as referring merely to the Bethlehem origin of the Ruler. But they go beyond this, as can be seen in the added and extending phrase, "from everlasting." The prophet, looking to the day of the Messiah,

gathers up the promises of the past to Eve, Abraham and David into one Messianic person, who will be ruler and Saviour.

But that day was not near at hand to the prophet. There must be a long time of waiting, for "he will give them over, until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth." Here is Micah's faith in the birth from the Virgin, of which Isaiah had spoken so clearly. In this time of waiting for His birth, His people shall be scattered over the earth. Afterwards they shall return, and He shall feed them as a shepherd; and then they shall abide.

The distinctive features of this prophecy seem to be: the prophet's expectation of the Messianic Age, in which a ruler of the stock of Jesse, the Promised One of the patriarchial days, born of the well-known virgin of prophecy, in the fulness of time, will gather the remnants of His scattered people, be their Good Shepherd, and establish them securely.

The remaining words of the passage recall the promise to David concerning his Son, who was to come after him; the promise of universal dominion, Psalm *89*:25-27, and of universal and enduring peace, Psalm *72*:7. The word translated "peace" in the pregnant phrase, "This man shall be our peace," seems rather to be intended for a name, a symbolic title, "Shalom." In days of war and confusion, all men, as both Isaiah and

Micah show, were longing for peace. This dear hope of his day the prophet puts as a crown on Messiah's head: "This man shall be (called) Shalom," "our Peace," or as the root of the word signifies, the completion, or filling full, of all hopes and ideals. The prophet may have caught attention for his words by a play upon Solomon, the type of the true Son of David, whose reign meant peace. Or he may have been calling to remembrance the well-known Messianic title of Isaiah, "Prince of Peace," of whose extending government and of peace, there would be no end (Isaiah 9:6-7).

We do not wonder, after closer scrutiny, that the Jews always held this prophecy in expectation, and the question of the Wise Men turned all minds to it. Our Lord also seemed to have it often in mind. He warned His disciples against wrong conceptions of this peace, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." But He also assured them of the fulness of the true peace which He brought, "My peace I give unto you."

With three comments upon this passage we shall conclude our consideration of it:

1. It is impossible to interpret this prophecy except of a person. Every phrase in it shuts out the possibility of application to Israel as a people, or to some general and indefinite Messianic ideal. Here in these verses we meet the royal Messiah face to face, as He makes His way, sometimes

seen, sometimes hidden, down through Old Testament history.

2. It is the bad habit of radical criticism, when it finds a personal Messianic passage, particularly one having symbolical, or something of apocalyptic form, to remove it from its historical context, and assign it to a very late period of Jewish literature. But this prophecy is anchored to its present context in Micah by the historical allusion which immediately follows:

> "When the Assyrian shall come into our land,
> And when he shall tread in our palaces."

The enemy whom Micah and his hearers knew was the Assyrian invading Judah in their days; naturally he takes the well-known power of his day as a descriptive figure of the enemy to be overcome in the far-away days. Radical criticism is always offended at highly spiritual or intensely Messianic passages, and removes them out of their historical place for some hypothetically appropriate setting in late centuries, without a syllable of corroborating proof, condemning a prophet out of the mouth of no witnesses at all. The radical critic is so afraid that something might have been foretold in the Old Testament, he busies himself lustily to remove all the evidence. Let it be understood by those who read, that the writer is troubled by none of these unitarian and pagan impediments. For him many other

great prophetic passages, besides Micah's, stand fast in their historical places by every sign and proof. He does not "assume" the impossibility of predictive prophecy, but holds to prophecy as a part of the reasonable Divine order.

3. A too literal and purely nationalistic interpretation may rob these great prophecies of their highest Messianic meaning. There is for Christian faith (it should be as true of Jewish faith) a spiritual Israel, which is more and greater than the old Israel. Hosea, Amos and Micah understood the prophecies in this sense of a spiritual, redeemed, world-wide Israel: "I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." So Paul understood this verse in Hosea, interpreting it of the Church of Christ, both Jewish and Gentile, Romans *9*:24-25. Let us not forget those words of the greatest interpreter of the Old Testament: "if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise," Gal. *3*:29. In our zeal for literalism for the future, we need not deny the joy and privilege of present fulfillment. While waiting for the return of the Jews to Palestine, we already have with us the larger and more blessed Israel of God. We can be confident that Hosea *2* and *14*, Amos *9* and Micah *5*, were written of the Messianic Israel, the church which our Lord Jesus purchased with His own blood.

CHAPTER TEN

PROPHETS OF THE EXILE

OF the four Major Prophets of the English Bible arrangement, three belong to the historical period of the Babylonian exile and its immediately anterior years. The fact of this exceptional demonstration of spiritual activity leads us to inquire if the Messianic message found corresponding emphasis in this period.

It may surprise us to find that it was not so much in evidence here as in other periods. These three great prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, seemed so involved in and intent upon the national and moral problems of their time, they found little time for the contemplation of the future. The nation had come to its supreme crisis. Moral corruption from within and pagan alliances from without taxed the full powers of Jeremiah and Ezekiel to warn and save their people. Since, as we have found, Prophecy is always true to its environment, and never fails to meet the needs, which press hard, we should not expect to find abundant references to the future in the books of this critical period.

Nevertheless there are some exceedingly interesting Messianic messages in these books, whose authors were so put to to meet the emergencies of their time. A few chapters in the heart of the

book of Jeremiah and near the end of Ezekiel, and the second part of the book of Daniel, which is pure prophecy, offer more fertile fields for Messianic expression than other parts of these books.

Jeremiah was the great preacher of his day. He has been misrepresented by the current description of him as "The Weeping Prophet," drawn probably from his words in the ninth chapter of his book: "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" On the contrary, he was a man of iron, courageous and unyielding, ever facing, never fearing danger. He was the one man of his day standing out alone and unafraid against the popular spirit of compromise and self-interest. The spirit of Samuel and of Elijah was upon him.

The very arrangement of his book is in itself a description, or characterization, of the man. After the introductory chapter, the general divisions are as follows:

(1) Judah's sins uncovered and denounced, Chapters *2-20*.

(2) Punishment pronounced as sure to come, Chapters *21-29*.

(3) Forgiveness and restoration foretold, Chapters *30-33*.

(4) History of the punishment inflicted, Chapters *34-39*.

(5) History of the Remnant left in Palestine, Chapters *40-45*.

(6) Prophecies against the surrounding nations, Chapters *46-51*.

(7) Historical Epilogue, Chapter *52*.

In this merely general and suggestive analysis divisions (1) and (2) are not mutually exclusive. Denunciation and punishment of sin are found alike in both; but the predominance of one or the other is indicated by the analysis as given above. The most impressive feature of the book is the place to which it assigns the promises for the future: not after, but before the history of the accomplished judgment. One would naturally expect numbers (3) and (4) to be given in reverse order. But so great is the loving-kindness of the Lord, that before the doom falls, He opens the door of hope into a future of Messianic expectation. This is characteristic throughout the Old Testament Messianic predictions. Isaiah begins the body of his book in Chapter two with a promise of future glory for the Zion, which Chapters *3* and *5* will so vehemently denounce for its apostasy and oppression.

It is with the third division of Jeremiah, Chapters *30-33*, that we are now concerned. With only an exception or two (*23*:5-8) all of his Messianic messages are found in these four chapters. They are given principally under two figures: first, the making of the New Covenant;

and secondly, the unbreakable covenant which was made with David and with the Levitical priests. To these may be added Jeremiah's use of two of Isaiah's Messianic expressions: the Branch, as expressive of the renewal, which Messiah will bring, and Righteousness as the characteristic of His reign on earth.

(1) Let us begin with the last of these. In Chapter twenty-two Jeremiah describes and denounces Jehoahaz (or Shallum), Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin as false and wicked shepherds, who misled and despoiled Israel, the flock of Jehovah. Nevertheless, David is Jehovah's beloved, with whom the covenant must stand forever. Therefore the prophet turns from these unworthy and wicked kings to the ideal king of the Messianic hope, whom the promised future will bring: "Behold the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute righteousness and judgment in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name by which he shall be called, "Jehovah, our Righteousness," Jeremiah *23*:5-6.

This prophecy is not unlike the Messianic conceptions and expressions of Isaiah. Indeed, it seems to be a combination and interpretation of Isaiah *4*:2 and *53*:11, and possibly also of Micah *5*:1-5.

(2) The chief Messianic section of Jeremiah, found in Chapters *30-33,* is one of the noblest passages of the Old Testament. The strain of confident hope in the future is sustained throughout the whole passage. Without these chapters the great prophet might be considered a John the Baptist of denunciation or a prophet of pessimism. Here he turns aside from his hard fight with greedy and infidel kings and their time-serving courtiers to remember the covenant promises, which came from olden time, and to take at least a glance into the future of fulfillment. He contemplates the people as in exile, and so his message of good news begins with their return and restoration. Throughout the passage runs the thought of the covenant and the promises given to the fathers, and this theme suggests the various Messianic figures, which are used.

The first of these figures is the New Covenant to be made with those restored from exile, Jeremiah *31*:31-34. The old covenant was written on stone, and was broken both literally and metaphorically. But the New Covenant cannot be broken, for it will be spiritual and inwrought. It will be written not on stone, externally, but on their hearts within, a covenant made by regeneration and spiritual readjustment, of which Peter speaks in one of his sermons (Acts *3*:31) as "the times of restoration of all things."

From the covenant made at the giving of the Law the prophet passed to the covenant connected with the Creation, to give it also interpretation in Messianic terms: "Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night . . . If these ordinances depart from before me, then the seed of Israel shall cease from being a nation before me for ever." *31*:35-36.

(3) In the thirty-second chapter Jeremiah tells King Zedekiah that Jerusalem will be taken by the Babylonians, who at that time were besieging it, and that he and his people will be carried away into captivity. But as a token of eventual return from exile, and of the rebuilding of the land and nation, Jeremiah is directed by the word of the Lord to redeem by purchase the field of his uncle Hanamel, have the deed witnessed and filed away in token of his confidence in the return of the people from exile, "for houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be brought in this land."

Again in the last of these chapters, *33*, the covenant of day and night, and ordinances of heaven and earth, are appealed to and used as a sign of the restoration and spiritual regeneration of the people. In the presence of imminent national ruin and exile the prophet clings to the everlasting covenant, and maintains the impossibility of its forfeiture. But for us the significant element in all of these prophetic signs and illustrations is

that they center around a person, "David their king," "seed of David my servant." This Person is the same as the Messianic personage in the prophecies of Isaiah and Zechariah. The clearest and fullest statement of this Messianic figure is found in Chapter *33*:15-17, "in those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land . . . for David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel."

Jeremiah sees the line of David apparently hastening to a physical end. Four kings in succession, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah have proved unfaithful and unfit. But a covenant was made with Abraham, Jacob and David which cannot be annulled. Therefore a greater Son of David with an endless reign in justice and righteousness must arise in the future. The prophet reminds himself and his people, not only of the vision of Isaiah and of Micah's return to Bethlehem for a king, but also of the Davidic covenant of II Samuel *7* and Psalms *89*. God is not a man that He should lie. "Once have I sworn by My holiness," He said. "I will not lie unto David," Psalm *89*:33. Therefore "if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall

not have a son to reign upon his throne," *33*:20-21.

Ezekiel was the great prophet of the Exile. He was the pastor of the congregation in their Babylonian captivity, called to this service by the command of the Lord and by the spiritual destitution of his comrades in exile. The chapters of his book record the sermons delivered to this congregation, who were drifting, some into fatalism, others to pagan cupidity and sensualism. After the first two introductory chapters his book falls into the following clear and natural divisions:

(1) Prophecies delivered before the destruction of Jerusalem *3-24*. Ezekiel was carried into captivity with the deportation of 697 B. C., along with Jehoiachin, who was dethroned by Nebuchadnezzar in favor of Zedekiah. These chapters deal chiefly with the sins, apostasies and fatalistic despair of the Jewish captive colony, with insistence on the certain fall of Jerusalem, which was being controverted by the exiles. The last of these prophecies was delivered in 588, two years before the fall of the city. Between this date and the arrival of tidings of Jerusalem's destruction falls the second section:

(2) Prophecies against the Nations, *25-32*. While waiting for the tidings which would confirm his prophecy of doom for the city, whose cup of iniquity was full, the prophet in logical

order took up the accountability of the nations at the judgment bar of Jehovah, just as Jeremiah logically put them at the end of his book. Five days less than three years after the date of his last prophecy against Jerusalem (*24*:1) the prophet received tidings of the fall of the city (*33*:21), and with this begins the last section of the book:

(3) Prophecies after the fall of Jerusalem, *33-48,* which have to do chiefly with the restoration and the future spiritual state and relations of the chosen people. It is with these chapters that our Messianic inquiry is concerned. Three of these messages of the restored and glorious future only can be considered.

(a) The Good Shepherd of Chapter *34,* who will surely come to save, defend and feed his plundered and scattered flock. Jeremiah and his younger contemporary Ezekiel were in agreement in many of their doctrines, and in the use of the same figures and phrases. As Jeremiah had denounced the apostate kings of his time as wicked shepherds, so Ezekiel pictures the day of deliverance as the time when the Good Shepherd will come to care for his own flock. This Shepherd is called both Jehovah (*34*:11, 30, 31), and David (*34*:23-24). In these latter verses Ezekiel puts himself in line with Isaiah, Micah and Jeremiah, all of whom held to the Messianic hope in terms of the covenant with David for his

Eternal Son. This chapter contains the original parable of Jehovah as the Good Shepherd, which Christ in John *10* explained as fulfilled in Himself.

(b) The well-known Gog and Magog chapters, *38* and *39,* have been of age-long and world-wide interest, and much of mystery has involved them. They have been turned to all manner of fantastic and fanatical uses. But the prophet's setting and purpose seem quite simple and direct. He is dealing in all of these chapters with a people restored to their own land. But the age of Messianic realization will not come with such physical restoration. After return to their own land will begin the great conflict of the ages. In Babylonia the prophet has seen the strange peoples of all lands, with their queer garbs and strange tongues, who had come to great Babylon from the west, as far as the wide stretches of Russia, and from the east, as distant possibly as ancient China. With these new and strange peoples the Kingdom of God and His Messiah will have to do after Israel's return from exile. So did the prophet foresee and foretell the long conflict of the Kingdom of Messiah, the Davidic Prince, with the pagan world, which has covered all the centuries of European history, and has now extended to every continent of the earth. Ezekiel's Armageddon was not a single local struggle, but an age-long conflict, involving all

nations, with the final stage to be fought and won on the continent and in the land of Israel.

(c) The last nine chapters of Ezekiel have been interpreted and misinterpreted in a dozen different ways. The radical critic calls them the "Law of Ezekiel," and finds in them the crucial link in the development from pre-exilic prophetical cult to post-exilic priestly ritual. The modern literalistic fanatic finds here the plans for a millennial temple, which is actually to be built at Jerusalem when Messiah comes again.

All such wild efforts at interpretation are based upon a misunderstanding of the place and purpose of these nine chapters. All of this last section of Ezekiel (*33-48*) deals with restoration from Exile. Chapters *33-39* contain more positive statements of the people's repentance, regeneration and restoration. Chapters *40-48* present and illustrate this restoration in splendid symbolical form. They were not intended as a law-code, but used the old known laws with symbolical meaning. The temple is only a part of the whole symbolical picture. The laws as used in Ezekiel could never be enforced, and no attempt was ever made to do so. The temple could not be built as planned, and the returned exiles never gave a thought to the use of these merely symbolical plans. So the prophet presents in picture a holy restoration and a spiritual kingdom.

Central in this symbolized restoration is the unusual and striking person, who is called "the Prince"; *45*:7, 16-17; *46*: 16; *48*:21; not king, nor governor, nor judge, nor high priest; but the Prince of the people, the Messianic Person in the midst of the prophetic symbolism. Who this Prince was in the mind of Ezekiel, can be clearly seen by reference to previous chapters. In *34*:24 he is called "my servant David, prince among them"; and in *37*:25 it is said of him, "David my servant shall be their prince forever." So Ezekiel keeps in line with all the prophets in proclaiming "the sure mercies of David"; the inviolability of the Messianic covenant, which Jehovah made with David.

The book of *Daniel,* like its author in his own day, is much spoken against in our day. It is the common and accepted canon of literary and historical criticism that the book originated in the early days of the Maccabæans, since it seems to describe the malignant attack of Antiochus IV on Jerusalem and his profaning the holy altar of sacrifice. This view persists in the face of difficulties, which flatly contradict it. The theory of the Maccabæan origin of the book, that is, about 165 B. C., leaves no place for explanation of the two languages in which it was written. If its origin was Babylonian in the sixth century B. C., then we well understand why Chapters *2-7,* concerning the Babylonians and Persians were written

in Aramaic; and chapters *1, 8-12* were written in good Hebrew, because they have to do with Hebrew prophecy and its fulfillment. The theory of Maccabæan origin is out of harmony with such facts as the accurate historical details of Chapters *2-6,* which read like the evidence of an eye-witness; the good exilic Hebrew of Chapters *8-12;* and the older Aramaic of Chapters *2-7.*

However, the date of the composition of the book of Daniel is a question quite aside from the meaning of its Messianic passages. These are true, and turned the hearts of the ancients onward to the coming of the Saviour, whether written in the sixth or in the second century before His coming. And therefore we take them up for consideration, all the happier that their bearing on our theme is not affected by any critical controversy. We may pass over the dream of Nebuchadnezzar in Chapter two, since its prophetic features will reappear in later chapters; while we take up the definitely prophetic chapters, *7-12.*

In these chapters two Messianic titles are found: the "Son of Man," *7*:14, and the "Prince" in Chapters *8* and *10.* The title "Son of Man" had Messianic meaning in the literature between the Testaments, and was used by our Lord Himself as a title indicating His Messiahship. In such passages as Matthew *25*:31 and *26*:64, and Mark *14*:62, our Lord uses it as the practical equivalent of Son of God, since He uses it in

connection with the exercise of His divine prerogatives. Already in the book of Daniel, of which our Lord was a student, and from which He quoted, the Messianic and Divine nature of the Son of Man is indicated, for "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," Daniel *7*:14.

The Prince is called the "Prince of the Host, *8*:11; and "the Prince of princes," *8*:25; and "Messiah the Prince," *9*:25. The return from the Babylonian captivity for Daniel was on the journey toward the fulfillment of the covenant hope in the coming of the Anointed Prince, the son of David.

In all the Messianic passages of these three prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, the dominant note is the coming of a promised and long expected person. In Jeremiah He is presented as "the Lord our Righteousness," in contrast with the unrighteous and ungodly kings of that age. In Ezekiel He is the Good Shepherd, in contrast with the kings and nobles, who had proved to be false and oppressing shepherds of God's people. In Ezekiel and Daniel he is called the Prince, because with the fall of Jerusalem the scepter had departed from the House of David, until the Greater Son of David, the Prince of princes, should come. But in all three the kingly idea or form of the Messiah is maintained in conformity

to the Davidic covenant, and in line with all the prophetic testimony, since that covenant was made. This wide field of prophecy, including three of the Major Prophets was not barren of Messianic hope, as some stretches of Southern skies are wastes not lighted by any stars. But gleams of light and seeds of hope are found even in these busiest and hardest fighting prophets of our Old Testament.

"And my servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. And David my servant shall be their prince forever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I, Jehovah, do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them forevermore," Ezekiel *37*:24-28.

These words make us feel that Ezekiel saw a coming One mightier than David, and a kingdom greater and wider than Israel, even the New Testament King and His world-wide, everlasting Kingdom.

The point at issue in the consideration of the Messianic note in these books is not the meaning of the quite elaborate symbols and signs, found

particularly in Ezekiel and Daniel. Such a discussion would carry us far afield, and involve controversies, which have nothing to do with our theme. The matter which concerns us is that in these books of strenuous men of a stirring age there appears the same Person, whose footsteps we have been following down through all of the Old Testament ages: the Seed of Abraham, Son of David, Ideal Prince, Eternal King. These ancient apocalyptic books are in unison with their New Testament successor, the Book of Revelation, which caught their note and prolonged their strain of triumph, as it proclaims: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PROPHETS OF THE RESTORATION ERA

WHILE in Jeremiah's prophecies, considered in the preceding chapter, we found a comparative lack of direct Messianic reference, nevertheless at times he did hold up and maintain the ancient hope of Israel, as in his doctrine of the New Covenant, in his insistence on the perpetuity of the covenant with David, and his three notable passages which present the "Branch" as David's Son and Isaiah's King of Righteousness.

Ezekiel also, we found, made a rich contribution to the preservation and progress of his nation's hope for Messiah both in direct and literal teachings and in noble symbolism. And Daniel gave to Messianic expectation and expression the title "Son of Man," which appears so often in the inter-testament books, and so constantly was used by our Lord of Himself. He was not under necessity to interpret the title, in order to bring to it Messianic meaning. Daniel and successive generations had invested it with that; He only needed to use it of Himself, in order to assert and proclaim His mission as Messiah.

But the symbolical and apocalyptic nature of Ezekiel's and Daniel's prophetical sections has

involved their interpretation in some difficulty, and has in consequence given rise to many divergent views. This is not true, however, of that small group of prophecies, with which the canon of Old Testament Prophecy closes, the prophets of the Persian, or post-exilic, period: Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. These are of special interest to us, because in them are found so many direct, personal and easily understood messages of the Messiah; and toward these prophetic messages the New Testament saints were always looking back. Living so much nearer the time of His coming, and having before them the messages of those who had gone before, they appear to have been able to see more clearly, and so to speak more definitely of, the Hope of Israel. God designed, in His gracious kindness, that before the canon of prophecy closed and the long dim ages began, which were to intervene before His coming, the final messages of the Holy men, moved by the Holy Spirit, should be clear and cheering.

Haggai prophesied about 520 B. C., in the second year of Darius the Great. The returned Jewish exiles had now been in the homeland for more than half a generation. But the chief object of their restoration by Cyrus, the rebuilding of the temple, had not been accomplished. The work at first begun with enthusiasm, had been aban-

doned early, because they despaired of ever erecting a structure adequate to the realization of their hopes for it; but chiefly because the people were too selfishly occupied in gathering the rich gains coming in from the harvests of their lands. Cedar-ceiled houses and a life of ease had displaced the simplicity and struggles of the early years. But drought and famine recalled them to their senses, and prepared their minds for the Lord's message through Haggai, to return to their neglected temple-building. Ere it was completed they were about to give over the task again, because the building they were rearing seemed so wretched when compared with the greatness of the former temple. The prophet was sent again to cheer them on, this time in the words of the prophecy, which is his chief distinction:

"Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the desired of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of Hosts; and in this place will I give *peace*," *2*:6-9.

The words "desired of all nations" are peculiar, and susceptible to several interpretations. The rendering above is the literal sense of the Hebrew. While the noun "desired" is in the singular number, the verb "shall come" is plural. On this

account some have translated, as the revised versions, "the desired *things* of all nations," sustaining this rendering by the words which follow: "the silver is mine and the gold is mine." The desired (or precious) things of all the nations shall come to the temple.

Reason to doubt the accuracy of this view is found in the singular form of the noun, the early scribes and copyists holding to the singular, or personal meaning. Also, the personal conception is favored by the coming of greater glory to the latter temple. And finally this is undoubtedly the idea conveyed by the last words of the prophecy, in this place I will give "peace," which carries the mind back to David's, Isaiah's, Micah's Prince of Peace, promised now by Haggai to bring glory to the latter temple. Under any of these interpretations, the passage still remains Messianic; the people's hearts were braced for effort by the lifting of their eyes to the future of promise.

Zechariah was contemporary with Haggai, and like him, sent to cheer the people in their work of temple building and national restoration. The first part of his book is apocalyptic in character, like Ezekiel and Daniel, influencing the author of Revelation. One prophecy in this part of the book must be noticed:

"Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and speak unto him,

saying, thus speaketh Jehovah of Hosts, saying, Behold, the man, whose name is the Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both," *6*:11-13.

(1) The person described in this passage is to be both priest and king, and there is to be no discord between the two offices in one person. Zerubbabel was ruler at this time; therefore, the person referred to cannot be Joshua himself, but Joshua is used as a symbol, or apocalyptic figure, of a coming person, the apocalyptic method being in harmony with the context. And further, the preservation of the crowns in the temple as signs corroborates their symbolical, not actual use. It is idle speculation to say that this was written of, and in the time of, Simon or John Hyrcanus, who were priest-rulers; for the passage is in an evidently genuine part of the book. Nor is there anything to explain why Joshua's name should be used for Simon or John. As in Psalm *110,* we have here again the conception of Messiah as Priest and King.

(2) The word "Branch" takes us back to Isaiah, who first used it with Messianic purpose, "in that day shall the sprout (or "branch") of

Jehovah be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land be excellent and comely," *4*:2. A land desolate and cursed because of its sins will "in that day," the Messianic age, put forth new and beautiful sprout, which will mature into a fruitful harvest. This is Isaiah's picture of regenerated life in the age of Messiah, taken from the revival of the land after winter, and the fresh growing grain, with its promise of harvest. This new life Isaiah further reveals, *11*:1, is to be an offspring of David, a sprout from the stock of Jesse. Both Jeremiah and Zechariah took up this Messianic figure, first used by Isaiah, to give it more definite and personal expression. The translators have caught the prophetic spirit of Jeremiah and Zechariah by writing the word with capital initial, Branch, as the name of a person.

(3) Jesus used this prophecy as pointing to Himself, when He said to the opposing Jews at Jerusalem: "destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," speaking not of the material temple, but of His body. Had the Jews remembered the words of Zechariah, they would have understood Jesus.

The second part of Zechariah, chapters *9-12,* has suggested an interesting question of literary criticism: whether these chapters are from the same hand as the first eight, or of different authorship. The most prominent feature of these chapters, which suggests such a possibility, is the

similarity in titles, with which chapters *9* and *12,* and also Mal. *1,* begin, namely, "the burden of the word of Jehovah." Some have thought on this ground, that we have here three brief prophetical messages, or booklets, Zechariah *9-11; 12-14;* and Malachi *1-4,* which were anonymous, and placed as supplements at the end of the canon of prophecy.

With this question of literary analysis we are not interested here, except that it calls attention to these chapters and their unique phenomenon: that they contain more prophecies of a personal Messiah than any other part of the Old Testament. We can do little more than cite these passages, connecting them with their use and interpretation in the New Testament.

Zechariah *11*:12-13 is quoted by Matthew, *27*:10, as fulfilled in the betrayal of Christ by Judas for thirty pieces of silver, which were returned by Judas when he realized the enormity of his deed; and then paid for the potter's field. Matthew's statement, that Jeremiah spoke these words, is not a slip of his pen, nor a scribal error, but is rather to be understood as his witness to Jeremiah's authorship of one of these prophetical booklets. Zechariah *9*:10 and other similar passages also suggest pre-exilic origin, so sustaining Matthew.

Zechariah *12*:10, "they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced," is quoted in the Gospel

of John, *19*:37, and in Revelation *1*:7, as spoken of the crucifixion of Christ. There is no other adequate interpretation of such words as these. Without the New Testament explanation they could never be other than enigmatical.

Zechariah *13*:7, "smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," was remembered by Jesus, and quoted to His disciples, in the garden of Gethsemane, as having been written of their forsaking Him at the time of His supreme trial.

The most interesting and specific of all Zechariah's prophetic messages is that of the King's entrance into Jerusalem, in chapter *9*:9:

> "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion;
> Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem;
> Behold, thy king cometh unto thee;
> He is just, and having salvation;
> Lowly, and riding upon an ass,
> Even upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

When Jesus was about to enter Jerusalem on the first day of the Passover week, He brought to pass the literal fulfillment of these words in Himself, by sending His disciples to bring the colt spoken of by the prophet hundreds of years before. By this Jesus proclaimed Himself as Messiah, and fulfillment of prophecy, and His disciples and the people understood that He did so. These words have no meaning in Zechariah apart from their goal in Jesus as Messiah. If this is not true, then He was either deceived, or

deceiver, and not worthy to be called Lord and Saviour.

All through these last six chapters of Zechariah, as also through Malachi, runs the phrase, "in that day," a characteristically Messianic expression, showing the intense yearning of that age for Messiah's coming, the hoping, waiting spirit with which the book of Old Testament prophecy was closing.

The book of Malachi is so named from the Hebrew word translated "My Messenger" at the beginning of the third chapter. It is the book of "My Messenger," that is, the Old Testament book of the forerunner of Christ. In conformity with this some versions and manuscripts have changed "Malachi" of the title to "Malacho," which means "his messenger." If this be true, then the entire book has Messianic purpose. It was a common tradition of the ancients that Ezra was this "messenger of Jehovah" of the title of the book.

The first Messianic passage of the book, *3*:1, tells of the mission of the messenger:

> "Behold, I send my Messenger *(Malachi)*,
> And He shall prepare the way before Me:
> And suddenly shall come to His temple
> The Lord, whom ye seek;
> And the Messenger of the Covenant,
> Whom ye desire, behold, He cometh,
> Saith Jehovah of Hosts."

The person certainly expected here is Divine in nature, for the messenger goes before Jehovah of Hosts, and the Coming One is *Adhon,* the sovereign Lord. He is also the Covenanted One, promised to the fathers and prophets, for His forerunner is the Messenger of the Covenant. Later, in *4*:5, this messenger is specifically called "Elijah," in which declaration we find anticipation of so many chapters in the Gospels.

The most significant and satisfactory comment on this promise of the messenger is found in the opening words of the Gospel according to Mark:

"The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as it is written in the prophets,

> Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,
> Who shall prepare the way."

Where the Gospel in Malachi left off in longing expectation, there the Gospel in Mark began, with its story of glorious fulfillment. And the Divine Person of Malachi, whose sudden coming he foresaw, is the Son of God of the Gospel according to Mark, whose coming in lowly humanity was so unexpected, so strange, and so contrary to popular expectation, as to lead to His rejection by those to whom He came. This rejection was also foreseen by Malachi, for he wrote, "who can abide the day of His coming?" *3*:2. And yet again:

"I have no pleasure in you, saith Jehovah of Hosts,
Neither will I accept an offering at your hand.
For from the rising of the sun,
Even unto the going down thereof,
Great shall be My name among the Gentiles;
In every place incense shall be offered,
And a pure offering to My name;
For my name shall be great among the Gentiles."

—Mal. *1*:10-11.

How natural it was then, after His rejection, death and resurrection, that our Lord commanded His disciples, "go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation," Mark *16*:15.

We may close this study of the last prophets no more appropriately than with the final words of Malachi, the Messenger of the Old Testament, which reads like a specially prepared preface to the New Testament: "Then they that feared Jehovah, spoke one with another; and Jehovah hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared Jehovah and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith Jehovah of Hosts, even mine own possession for *the Day that I am making.*

Unto you that fear My name shall rise
The Son of Righteousness with healing in his beams,
Behold I send you Elijah the prophet,
Before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come;

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,
And the heart of the children to their fathers;
Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

"The heart of the fathers toward the children"?; that is, the Old Testament looking toward the New. "The heart of the children toward their fathers"?; that is, the New Testament turning its face toward the Old. And thus has the Providential preservation and order manifested in gracious beauty the meeting place between the Old and the New: the unbroken and undivided Scriptures.

There is always for us a plaintive sweetness in these prophetic voices, coming to us, as they do, out of the dim light and out of the hungry, yearning hearts of the Old Testament. I lay claim sometimes to a mockingbird, not caged, but living out in the open air, as free as the air he breathes, who is constantly reminding me of the sweet meaning of the prophetic messages. This mockingbird for years has made his home in the great holly tree across the way, staying by us in summer as in winter. When, after the winter is past, he perches on the chimney top over my study, or on the spire of the Library over against my window, and sings out hour by hour the gladness which spring and summer put into his heart, I do not care for his song. For the notes of his day-song are in the major key, and

sound bold and raucous in comparison with the soft trills of cardinal or thrush. But when he sings at night! That is quite another story. I love to lie awake and listen, as in the darkest hour of the night, not far from the dawn, from his perch in the holly tree he pours out in plaintive minor key the sweetest notes that come from feathered throats. He seems to sing, in faith and hope, his message of confidence in the coming day, the herald of the dawn. So do those prophetic voices coming out of the Old Testament's darkest hours, like the music of "songs in the night," tell with peculiar sweetness of the certain coming of the promised day, the Day of Messiah; singing and waiting for the day to dawn, and for the day-star to arise.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE VISION OF ISAIAH

THE book of this prophet, preëminent among the written prophets, has been reserved for our final study of the prophetical books, because it is, above all others, the book of the Messiah in the Old Testament. The title of the book, "The *Vision* of Isaiah," turns our eyes to the future at the very beginning. The word indicates a spiritual, or mystical, or transcendental, or far-away, vision; not what the eye sees, but the vision of the heart, when the eyes are closed. What eye could not see, nor ear hear, neither could enter into the imagination of man, God has revealed to us by His Spirit through Isaiah.

This prophet, like Micah, whose message has already been considered, belonged to the Assyrian period, and fulfilled his ministry between 741 and 695 B. C. At that time Assyria and Egypt were struggling against each other for world supremacy, and unfortunate Palestine lay between the two contestants. Its strategic position made it coveted of both empires, and in consequence invading armies often swept ruthlessly through all its length. This struggle of centuries, coming to its climax in Isaiah's time, must be held in mind, in order to the understanding of many of his chapters. The whole world was in upheaval, very

much as in our own time. Many nations were seeking better places for themselves in the sun, and fighting also to make their national gods supreme on earth. Isaiah's land and kings were caught in this restless and ambitious surging of the peoples.

Of the prophet himself we know very little, and that little only as certain events of his life were used with symbolical meaning. His father is given as Amoz, but who was he? prince or plebeian? Isaiah may have been an aristocrat, as tradition insists that he was; he may have been of the common people, for whose rights he fought so faithfully. However this may have been, he was a prince in genius and equipment, the master of highest ideals and most beautiful diction. His book is the finest art gallery of the past, nearly every verse a picture with the finest lines and colors of art. For unforgetable figures of speech, which by their aptness and beauty have passed into the vocabulary of the ages, we owe more to Isaiah than to any other Old Testament book.

Strange it is that such a man should hide himself. Jeremiah and Ezekiel talk often of themselves. But this man, like John, who came to bear witness of another, seemed to be intent on hiding himself behind Him, whose glory it was his mission to proclaim long before He really came. It is true that we do not see much of

Isaiah in his book; but it is sufficient that we see his Lord there.

The exceeding beauty of the book, especially its marvels of prophetic vision, necessarily gave opportunity to antisupernaturalistic critics to dispute its genuineness and unity. Some minds seem constitutionally and habitually inclined always to kick at the good and the wonderful. It is an unfortunate deficiency, which perhaps should not be judged too harshly, because it is a helpless deficiency. These rebels against the beautiful have relieved Isaiah of his splendid clothing, and left him half naked. They have stripped away from him the gladness of faith and song, and left the dry skeleton of a preacher of invective. A reference to the future, or a gleam of Messianic hope, is sufficient evidence with these judges, to condemn such a passage to be tumbled down the centuries.

But we are not concerned over-much with these multitudinous internal disturbances of criticism. And if we were, which should we follow? George Adam Smith, or Driver, or Cheyne, or Duhm, or Marti, who disagree by centuries in their assignment of the time of origin to the same chapters. It must have been, not Job, but a redacting higher critic, who wrote: "God (only) knoweth the way that I take." We welcome back, headed toward the fold, our new rescuing critic Sellin, returning like the brave shepherd of Amos, having saved

from the jaws of the critical lion two legs and part of an ear; that is, about thirty chapters. However, whether the book came into its present form by the hands of Isaiah's disciples just after his death, or in or after the Exile, we have it now as it was completed centuries before Christ, and its Messianic vision, whether four centuries long, or seven, is in either case a miracle of the Spirit of God.

The place of this book in the New Testament, not equalled nor approached by any other book, indicates its value as Messianic. Beginning with Matthew *1*:23, and Mark *1*:2, it appears countless times in evangels and epistles.

The number and variety of its titles and names of the Messiah, and of its descriptive phrases of His kingdom, mark it as Messiah's book in a special way. Some of these titles are: The Branch; King of Righteousness; Prince of Peace; The Anointed One; Seed of Abraham; Chosen One; Immanuel; and Servant of Jehovah. The first of these we found also in Jeremiah and Zechariah; the Prince of Peace in David's songs and in Micah; and Seed of Abraham through the whole course of the Old Testament.

Two of these titles are distinctive of Isaiah, and of greatest importance in the Old Testament anticipation and the New Testament realization of the Messiah. To these two we shall give the space at our command. First, *Immanuel,* which

is used of the Messiah only in Isaiah, unless we find it also in the refrain of the forty-sixth psalm, "The Lord of Hosts is *with us*" (Immanu). But this psalm also may have come from the pen of Isaiah. The word Immanuel means "God (is) with us," prophetic of "that day," when God would manifest Himself to and among His people, for their salvation and the consummation of His kingdom. Although the word is Isaiah's, the idea pervades all Old Testament prophecy.

The Immanuel passages are all found in the first part of Isaiah, in chapters *7* to *11,* and *32,* all of which, by Sellin and many others, are affirmed to be from Isaiah's hand. These chapters belong to the time of the invasion of Judah by Israel and Syria, which well nigh brought the end of Judah, this catastrophe being prevented only by the greater menace of general Assyrian invasion. The extreme peril of those days turned some men to profiteering, others to the acceptance of the gods of the invading pagans. It sent Isaiah into the temple of Jehovah. It made him turn his face to the future for a vision of the Promised One, the King able to save, and to reign in righteousness. In the dark hour of that night Isaiah saw the Morning Star.

(1) Immanuel first appears in chapter *7,* verses 14-17. The allied armies of Israel and Syria held Jerusalem in the iron grip of a siege, which had brought the city to the verge of despair.

Already the allies had decided upon a foreigner, who should be seated on the throne of David, when the city fell, one called "the son of Tabeel," Is. 7:6. King Ahaz and his staff had gathered, it seems, to consider some last desperate expedient for deliverance, when the prophet Isaiah appeared among them. His message from the Lord was that Ahaz might dismiss his fears, for the two kings must soon abandon the siege, and their own destruction was hurrying on. Seeing unbelief in the faces of his hearers, Isaiah offered a sign from the Lord, any sign they might ask, from heaven above to hell below. Ahaz, who was hostile to Isaiah's religion and to his policy for Israel, rejected the prophet's gracious offer with scorn. Isaiah knew that Ahaz, refusing to trust Jehovah, had put his faith in Assyria, and bought its intervention with a ruinous tribute; and Ahaz possibly had tidings, or at least some hope, that just then the Assyrian was invading the land of Syria. So in hypocrisy or scorn he answered the prophet: "I will not ask, neither will I tempt Jehovah." Then the prophet, turning upon the apostate king, said, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign" (whether you ask it or not).

This is the historical setting of the appearance in revelation for the first time of the Immanuel sign. The first element in its interpretation must be that it is not a sign of blessing to Ahaz, the apostate, but of judgment or deprivation. The

emphasis of the sign is not upon the birth of Immanuel, but upon the time condition: before the child can come to years of moral discretion and accountability, twelve years with the Jews, Israel and Syria will be conquered and in captivity. After that, instead of deliverance through Immanuel, Ahaz and wicked Judah will be judged and punished: "Jehovah will bring upon thee, and upon thy people," days darker than those through which they were then passing.

Our English versions do not give an accurate translation of the Hebrew words, nor show the contrast of some of the archaic forms of the words of the "Sign" with Isaiah's own classic Hebrew. The original does not read "a virgin," but "*the* virgin," or young woman just come to marriageable age. She is not an indefinite or general character; but a well-known person to Ahaz, to Isaiah and to all who heard. The expression "curds and honey shall he eat," are not promise of rich food and opulence, but of a desolated land and a childhood spent in poverty, as described in 7:21-25. "Before the child shall know," as was suggested above, indicates that Immanuel would not come at that time, because before he could come to manhood and save his people, what Ahaz desired would already have come by other means. The words of this phrase are archaic Hebrew and condensed into the form of poetical proverb. The word also translated "shall conceive" is an early

Hebrew form, possibly a verb in the masculine form which belonged to the earlier days, when one form represented both genders.

Our conclusion is, then, that Isaiah quoted the well-known Immanuel prophecy, written before his time, but uses it negatively with reference to Ahaz; Immanuel and his salvation will not come to Ahaz. This is not the first instance of the use by Isaiah of an earlier book of Messianic prophecy. He and Micah in common, as shown in Chapter Nine above, drew from some common source the exaltation of Zion to give justice and peace to all nations, Isaiah *2*:1-4. It seems possible that there was once a book of Immanuel, known to Isaiah and his time, but lost to us; and that we are indebted to this crisis of those days of darkness for its preservation in our Scriptures.

Let us translate the passage in harmony with what has been said above:

"Behold the virgin has conceived, and is about to bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Curds and honey shall he eat until the time of his knowing to refuse evil and to choose good?"

So for the quotation, with Isaiah's question mark. But after it comes the meaning and application to Ahaz: "But before the lad should know to refuse evil and to choose good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken (the captivity of the Northern Kingdom). Then Jehovah will bring upon thee, and upon thy people,

and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah, even the king of Assyria."

This interpretation meets the facts of the historical context, of the archaic words so different from Isaiah, and of the judgment on Ahaz. At the same time, it has, in the providence of God, and by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, preserved for us this ancient message of hope, here quoted by Isaiah; so that Matthew *1*:23, could turn to it when the Virgin had brought forth: "Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through *the prophet* (Matthew, usually so exact, does not say Isaiah), saying:

> Behold the virgin shall be with Child,
> And shall bring forth a Son.
> And they shall call His name Immanuel."

Efforts at a purely rationalistic explanation on historical lines are vain. One says that the woman was the wife of Ahaz, and the child Hezekiah. But Hezekiah was nearly grown at the time. Another thinks that Isaiah speaks of his own wife, who had two other children with symbolical names. But she could not possibly have been spoken of as the virgin just reaching marriageable age. The suggestion that some woman seen in the crowd was made the object of Isaiah's words is a mere evasion. We meet here a Divinely pre-

served record of the definite hope of Messiah, cherished in Old Testament hearts. We have found its answer only in Jesus.

(2) Isaiah *9*:1-6 is the second Immanuel passage, although the name occurs twice in chapter eight, harking back to *7*:14-17. In the closing verses of chapter eight Isaiah pictures the desolation of Galilee after the Assyrian invasion. Burning homes and fields fill the land with darkness. The traveler passes through it hungry and thirsty, and as if he were being thrust into outer darkness. Isaiah saw this gloom dispelled by Immanuel's coming. Here is another miracle of prophecy; that Isaiah, a patriotic Jew, should see Immanuel coming first to Galilee, hated and despised in his day, just as in Nathaniel's. There is no other explanation of this strange phenomenon, except that he was "borne along by the Holy Spirit." When Jesus came into Galilee, preaching, teaching and healing, the people remembered the words of Isaiah:

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light brightly shined. . . . For unto us a child has been born, unto us a son has been given: and the principality shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there

shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever."

These words contain Isaiah's own positive conception of Immanuel over against the negative aspect, presented to Ahaz in *7*:14-17. The features of this new conception are:

(a) Immanuel's first ministry will be in Galilee.

(b) Divine titles are ascribed to Him, who is the Son of the Highest; for no good Jew could have given such titles to mere man. "Mighty God" and "Everlasting Father" admit of no other interpretation.

(c) The characteristic features of the Davidic Covenant are found here: he shall sit on David's throne, his kingdom is everlasting; and he is God's Son, as Jehovah had promised David.

(3) In Isaiah *11*:1-9, the third Immanuel passage, new features appear in Isaiah's picture of the Messiah. He is of the house of Jesse; the Spirit is poured out abundantly on him; righteousness and justice are the foundation and strength of his reign; and peace will fill the whole earth.

The tenth chapter closes, like the eighth, with a scene of desolation. Before the mighty Assyrian, the houses of Israel have fallen as trees of the forest before the axes of the woodmen. Only the bare stumps remain to accentuate the desolation. Then begins the message of hope in the

eleventh chapter; one of these stumps has life in it, and will put forth again; for there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse.

The accuracy and evenness of his justice are described by the keenness of the sense of smell: "he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears"; but, literally, "his smelling shall be in the fear of Jehovah." His sensitiveness to the fear of Jehovah will be as keen as the sense of smell. Righteousness is declared to be the strength of his reign by the figure of girded loins or waist.

Finally, his reign of perfect righteousness will heal the wounds of the world and establish everlasting peace. This is symbolized under the figure of the animal and man restored to innocent comradeship, the most beautiful picture of the Old Testament:

"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little child shall drive them.
And the cow and the bear shall feed;
Their young ones shall lie down together,
And the man-eating lion shall eat straw like the ox.
And the suckling child shall dance on the den of the python,
And the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's eye,
They shall not hurt nor destroy

In all my holy mountain;
For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah,
As the waters cover the sea."

(4) Isaiah *32*:1-4 continues in the same form and spirit these Immanuel passages, bringing a climax of kingliness to Immanuel and his reign:

"Behold a king shall be a king in righteousness,
And as for princes, they shall be princes in equity.
And *an individual* shall be as a hiding place from the wind,
And a covert from the tempest,
As streams of water in a dry place,
As the shade of a great cliff in a weary land."

(5) The first part of Isaiah's book closes with a glowing description of Immanuel's age, chapter *35,* under four figures; the transformed desert; the ills of the human body healed; oases and a highway through the desert; and the redeemed coming over this highway to Zion as singing pilgrims, with joy like a crown on their heads.

So Isaiah saw in vision Immanuel, the King of Righteousness, on an everlasting throne, in an age of universal peace. All the wonderful words of preceding prophecies seemed to be gathered up by him into this incomparable description of the Coming Redeemer.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH

THE second part of Isaiah, chapters *40-66,* is prefaced and introduced by the historical section of the book, chapters *36-39;* especially by the words of Isaiah in *39*:6:

"Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith Jehovah. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

This is an introduction, or dating, of the following prophecies, just as genuine as the historical introductions to chapters *6, 7* and *20.* The intention, so to date and assign it, of those who have so arranged the prophet's book, cannot be mistaken.

These chapters are both alike and unlike the first thirty-five chapters in tone, color and spirit. They are similar in vocabulary, in illustration, in geographical and topographical setting, in floral and animal life, and in conception of the Deity, using the same Isaianic title for God, "the Holy One of Israel," as the first part of the book. In fact, the internal arguments for unity of author-

ship are ninety per cent to ten per cent, and most of the ten per cent are rationalistic presupposition.

But there is a difference in attitude and outlook. In the second part the prophet no longer looks with glad hope for the settlement of the ills of his day by the coming to the throne of a glorious King of righteousness, and the early establishing of peace among the nations through his just reign. Righteousness and peace cannot come through moral or civic or national changes. The root of the evil is much deeper. The whole people has become corrupted, apostate and unworthy. The prophet has been saddened and disillusioned by the rejection of his message and the willful covenant breaking of his people. In his distress he turns from men and measures, from earthly kings and princes, to Jehovah Himself for the hope of the Promise.

This is not an unnatural experience, nor does it require a theory of diverse authorship for its explanation. It happens often within the life experience of a Gospel minister, whose life service begins with roseate visions of a message from his loving heart accepted and heeded by his hearers, and through it towns and communities turned to righteousness. But the passing years are marked by the gravestones of his fairest hopes. The selfish, carnal minds of men remain unbelieving and unchanged. In the spiritual

awakening, which comes with disappointment, he looks to God alone for saving help.

This represents, even if in low degree, the change of attitude and method, which is found in the two parts of this book. The prophet has to face the hard, and apparently insoluble problem of righteousness. How can a sinful and unrepenting people be saved? How shall a covenant be kept with covenant breakers? How is it possible for God ever to justify the unjust? It is the same old problem of the book of Job, and of some of the Psalms. It is really the dilemma which came with the fall, and had continued through all time.

Isaiah turns for the answer of this problem to Jehovah. He alone can help. The subjective righteousness which, in the first part of the book he pled for in the hearts of king and people, has now become objective to them, the righteousness of Jehovah, which He alone can achieve and provide. This Paul saw so clearly, as of it he wrote: "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God," Romans *10*:3. "Not a righteousness of mine own, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith," Phil. *3*:9. Paul's answer to the problem, and Isaiah's are the same.

If one party to the Covenant is habitually and stubbornly truant and unfit, then the other strong party to it must assume and bear the weight of both sides, or the Covenant must become void. But David's and Abraham's and Eve's Covenant could not be voided. So Isaiah laid all the burden on the strong shoulders of the Eternal, calling on His strong arm to save. The words of this prophecy are filled with this theme: the revealed arm of Jehovah; He was pierced by our transgression; by His knowledge shall My Righteous Servant make righteousness for many. Out of the agony of his grievous problem Isaiah was led to a solution which is everlasting in the Gospel. In the gloom of that hour of impending and inevitable death there appeared the form of a Divine Saviour bringing life and immortality to light.

Thus Isaiah worked out the answer to the problem of righteousness in the form of the Servant of Jehovah, who is one of the chief personages of the Old Testament, ranking in Messianic importance with Prophet, Priest and King. The interpretations of this remarkable person, who is only found in the Scriptures of Jew and Gentile, have been many, following ordinarily two general lines; although he has been supposed by some, as Sellin, to represent some actual Old Testament person. One group of interpreters holds that the Servant of Jehovah passages *all*

speak of an individual. But this is not possible, because some passages are evidently nationalistic. Others maintain that all are national in application; but this also is impossible, since some passages are unalterably individual in meaning.

We must believe that here, as in the Immanuel sections, there is a progressive and developing presentation. Beginning with an older and well-known idea of the Servant, the inspired prophet advances to a higher, spiritual and redemptive vision. In accordance with all of our experience of prophecy, this Messianic message of hope takes upon itself the form of something known and cherished, that through it the people may understand the promise. We shall follow the development of the vision in the regular, historical order of the passages. There is no way better or more honest.

1. The Servant, by this name, appears first in Isaiah *41*:8-13, under the form of the nation: "Israel, my servant; Jacob, whom I have chosen; seed of Abraham, my lover." This is no new idea, but is taken directly from the covenant promises of the past; "ye shall be Mine own possession from among all peoples. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation," Exodus *19*:5-6. Israel was chosen from among the nations to serve Jehovah, and glorify Him in the earth. The promises of olden time declared

this again and again. With this familiar fact the prophet begins his vision of the Servant.

2. But in the second passage, *42*:1-4, we enter upon a new phase of the Servant development. Here there is no reference whatever to the nation; but directly to a person, endued with the Spirit for a mission to Jew and Gentile, with special emphasis on justice and salvation for the Gentiles. The passage is a companion piece to Isaiah's vision of justice and peace in *2*:1-4. The evident personal meaning of this description of the Servant led Matthew to proclaim its fulfillment in Christ's Galilean ministry, Matthew *12*:15-21. We may well think that Matthew is here recording the interpretation given by Jesus Himself. A reason for the prophet's turning from the nation is found in verses 18-25 of this 42d chapter, describing the national servant as blind, deaf and lawless.

3. Chapter *43*:1-7, however, brings a reaction in the prophet's mind to the first phase, of chapter *41;* for he loved his people, and clung for their sake to the promises for them made to Abraham and the fathers. We can see and sympathize with the struggle in his own soul; for how could he cast out his own Israel! Let us read them:

"Thus saith Jehovah, that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel: fear not, for I have redeemed thee."

But here we find that this is not a national Israel, but a redeemed Israel, another instance of Isaiah's well-known doctrine of the saved remnant; with no reference to the mission of the Servant in a direct manner, as in preceding chapters. The prophet is wrestling in chapters *42* and *43* with the fact of the stubborn sins of his people. So redemption, not service, becomes his theme. The old national idea is passing through the crucible of refining. Stern are the words with which the prophet denounces the old Israel after the flesh:

> "Thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob;
> But thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel.
> Therefore I will profane the holy princes,
> And I will make Jacob a curse,
> And Israel a reviling."
>
> —*43*:22-28.

4. In chapter *44* the redemptive phase of the prophet's conception is further developed under two figures: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Servant, like the streams which give life to the parched earth, *44*:3-4; and secondly, the blotting out of Israel's transgressions as a thick cloud, *44*:22. But this chapter has for Israel its near historical goal; for it ends with the call of Cyrus to restore them to their land; not the distant, final goal of Messianic consummation. Chapter *45* tells of the conquests of Cyrus northward and westward, as far as the kingdom of

Crœsus. Chapters *46* and *47* narrate the fall of proud Babylon, that the captives may escape from her.

5. Chapter *48* brings the culmination of the rebellion and unfitness of the national Servant. The arraignment of Israel by Jehovah makes forever impossible the conception of national Israel as His Servant in succeeding chapters. The words themselves are their own interpreter:

> "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob,
> Who are called by the name of Israel,
> And are come forth out of the waters of Judah;
> Who swear by the name of Jehovah,
> And make mention of the God of Israel,
> But not in truth, nor in righteousness.
> Because I knew that thou art obstinate,
> And thy neck an iron sinew,
> And thy brow brass;
> Therefore I have declared it to thee from of old.
> Yea, thou heardest not;
> Yea, thou knewest not;
> Yea, from of old thine ear was not opened.
> For I knew that thou didst deal treacherously,
> And wast called a transgressor from the womb.
> For My name's sake will I defer mine anger,
> And for My praise will I refrain from thee,
> That I cut thee not off." —*48*:1-9.

They shall indeed go forth out of Babylon, but still unregenerate; for, as the chapter closes, "there is no peace, saith Jehovah, to the wicked."

After the prophet has reached this climax in his realization of Israel's unfitness as a nation to be Jehovah's Messianic Servant, a climax which Paul characterized as the casting off of Israel, we must expect a marked transition in his theme; and so it is that:

6. Chapter *49* introduces an altogether different phase of the Servant. Here for the first time in Isaiah's vision, he appears in the first person, speaking for himself:

> "Jehovah hath called me from the womb.
> And He saith unto me, Thou art My servant;
> Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

The word "Israel" is rejected from the text by some authorities, because it is superfluous to the meter of the line, and altogether out of harmony with the unmistakably individual application of the passage. But this is neither necessary nor probable; for in his transition the prophet holds to the old name-form of the Covenant, to fill it with new and personal contents. He sees a new Israel, the Christ and His church, the true Israel of God.

That it is impossible here to hold any longer to a national conception is most evident, because the Servant is clearly and finally separated from the nation, and set objectively over against it:

> "And now saith Jehovah that formed Me
> From the womb to Be His Servant,

To bring Jacob again to Him,
And that Israel be gathered unto Him;
It is too light a thing that Thou shouldest be
My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved of Israel:
I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles,
That Thou mayest be my salvation
Unto the end of the earth." —*49*:5-6.

The distinction between Israel, as the nation, and Israel as a Messianic individual is too evident to admit of question. Holding with one hand to the historic form of the old covenant, the prophet points with the other to the Redeemer in the New Covenant. Paul so uses these words and their distinction between Israel and the Servant in his second Sabbath sermon at Antioch, Acts *13*:47: "Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying,

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,
That thou shouldst be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.

And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God."

Never again in his Servant chapters, after this rise to a spiritual conception of the Servant, will

Isaiah ever return to the purely national phase. He may speak of redeemed individuals in the plural as "My servants," "My ministers," but never again of the nation in the singular, as "My Servant." It is true that Moffatt in his "New Translation of the Old Testament" inserts the word "Israel" twice in his translation of chapter *53*. But it is an arbitrary act, an interpretative speculation, like his many other wild ventures at rendering in a book, which is a radical effort at interpretation, although it will surely plead in vain for place among accepted and faithful translations.

7. In chapter *50* we find the Servant speaking again for Himself, and declaring His gentle submission to the Father's will. As chapter *42* is related to *41*, in its description of the gentle meekness of the Servant after His first national phase, so does chapter *50* show the grace and gentleness of the Servant under the new individual phase, and in words which bring into clearness before us the trial and crucifixion of Christ:

> "The Lord Jehovah hath opened Mine ear,
> And I was not rebellious,
> Neither turned away backward.
> I gave My back to the smiters,
> And My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair;
> I hid not My face from shame and spitting."
>
> —*50*:5-6.

Let the reader compare these words of gentle obedience to the Father with the prophet's description of the natural, national and unfit Israel in *48*:8:

> "Yea, thou heardst not; yea, thou knewest not;
> From of old time thine ear was not opened."

The great climactic Servant of Jehovah passage, chapter *53* to which we now come and for which chapter *49* has prepared us, deserves a separate chapter for its consideration.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE SUFFERING SERVANT

AFTER reading of the Servant's personal appearance, and the announcement of His mission world-wide to the nations, as well as to Israel, we find ourselves awaiting a full statement of His great work, and our expectation is not in vain, for Isaiah *52*:13-*53*:12 brings to us this statement in a revelation so vivid and startling as to make it the most prominent chapter in the Old Testament. It is the high peak of Messianic prophecy, which after the individual development of chapter *49*, and by its own clear words, refuses to admit adequate interpretation as of the nation, but only in the most luminous person of history, the Messiah. National application falls down, because there never has been, is not now, and never shall be, a nation, which can measure up to these otherwise unthinkable words.

In this chapter it is the nation, or group, which gazes upon, and speaks of, one objective to itself. How can this be that, and that be this? How can plus be minus, or positive be negative, or objective be subjective? No more could Israel be atoner and atoned for, both sufferer and saved. Some have essayed to distinguish a saving Israel within a saved Israel, a device which is as queer, as it is in vain. But these points of interpretation

will appear in a study of the words of the passage itself.

It has been called the "Psalm of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah." In form it is poetical, a hymn of the Messiah in five stanzas as follows:

1. *The Servant Lifted Up,* in order that all may look upon him, and see the unexpected and amazing thing which has happened to him, Isaiah *52*:13-15.

It is a mistake to interpret these three verses as teaching the exaltation of the Servant, in the sense of the extolling of his grace and glory. Such a mistake is found in the marginal reference of the Revised Versions, which relates the words, "exalted and lifted up," to the "high and lofty one" of Isaiah *57*:15. Just the opposite, however, is true. These words may better be related to, and interpreted by, the declaration by our Lord of His being lifted up upon the Cross, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," words which seem to carry us back to their source in the prophetic vision of Isaiah. Here we look, not upon the exaltation in glory, but upon the lifting up of the Servant, that we may behold His body pierced, and His soul poured out unto death. That this is true, an accurate rendering of these three verses will prove:

"Behold My Servant shall deal tactfully,
He shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.
Just as many were in consternation at Him—

(So marred was His face more than any man's,
And His figure more than the sons of men)—
So shall He startle many nations.
Kings shall shut tight their mouths at Him;
For that which had not been told them, shall they see;
And that which they had not heard, shall they perceive."

That which had overwhelmed with amazement the disciples and the faithful ones at the Great Passover, shall also throughout all time startle kings, as the heads and representatives of all nations. In all time the unthinkable and immeasurable depths of the humiliation of the Servant of Jehovah will bring astonishment to those who look upon Him. For, they had longed and waited for the King in His Beauty, the Glorious Seed and Son of Covenant Promise, the Desire of All Nations. But when they look upon Him—what is this that they see? A stretched and suffering body upon a cross of shame! A face gashed and blood-stained from the crown of thorns! A figure drawn with anguish and torn by dull, rough iron! Who could think but with amazement upon this thing, which passed all belief! So we are brought in natural sequence of revelation to the second stanza:

2. *The humiliation and suffering of the world's promised and expected Redeemer* far surpassing all powers of thought or description, Isaiah *53*:1-3:

"Who has believed what we have heard?
And to whom has the arm (or salvation) of Jehovah
been revealed?
For he grew up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of a dry ground:
He has no grace or attractiveness, that we should look
on Him;
And there is no beauty, that we should desire Him.
He was despised and abandoned of men;
A man of pains and known of sickness;
And as one from whom men hide their faces,
He was despised, and we considered Him not."

Here are figures and pictures so startling, that neither translators nor interpreters have ever been willing to take them at their face value. Let us now be honest with these figures of speech, and give to them the values for which they call. In paraphrase they seem to be telling us: The King of Righteousness, bringing salvation, foretold and magnified by sage, prophet and poet, has at last, in vision, appeared. But what an appearance! Who *can* believe the report we bring of Him? The King of Glory! No, a Man of Sorrows! One shrinks from giving literal meaning to the harsh and shameful metaphors, which describe His appearing: an untimely sprout wilted under the fierce sun; a bulb burned and shrivelled in the cracked surface of the rainless and blistered ground; a figure without a line of grace; a face without a trace of beauty! No, the artists, from

traditional Luke to Raphael and Hunt and Hoffman and Munkacsky, were all in error! His was not a noble countenance and a majestic form, but a body that knew disease, and a face marred by the sharp lines of pain. Those who knew Him best forsook Him and fled as from one tainted and accursed. And as for ourselves, we gave this Humiliated One no consideration at all, but we turned our faces away as from one bowed and misshapen by deformity, and we shrank away as from one accursed. The poet-prophet was expected to turn his face upward toward the skies for the vision of the King; but on the contrary, he was looking over the precipice, and saw in the lowest depth of woe and shame—the Son of David, the Son of God! Who *hath* believed the report we heard!

Those who would solve this riddle, must go to the Evangelists, and follow through their pages the footsteps of Him, in whom only could be combined the highest heights of Godlikeness and the lowliest humanity. Now we see Jesus made lower than the angels, for the black darkness of Gethsemane, for the ignominies of the judgment hall, for the agonies of Golgotha, that He might taste death for every man.

This second stanza of the Psalm of the Suffering Servant pictures for us a festal scene of an after year. A multitude of belated pilgrims is hurrying, on the last day before the Feast, up to

Jerusalem, the city of their fathers, to celebrate at Jehovah's Temple their passover festival. They were coming from many and from far distant lands. Some of them had never before seen the holy city, its altar and its temple. Their hearts were filled with glad expectations, and they came singing with joy the songs of Ascent to Zion. But what is this strange spectacle, which meets their eyes, as they draw near the city of their fondest love? Surely this is no scene for glad holiday or stately festival: three execution crosses, each with its agonizing victim, raised on a hill almost in the path of their pilgrimage of joy! "And as one from whom men hide their faces, He was despised, and we gave Him no consideration."

The strangest part of this strange story is the reason for this unbelievable humiliation of Jehovah's Servant, and this is given in the third stanza, Isaiah *53*:4-6:

3. *Not for Himself, but for us* He assumed and endured the Cross, despising the shame. This third and central stanza is also the center and heart of the psalm's meaning and message. Like the preceding stanzas, it also has its literal and almost weird figures, before which translators seem likewise to have hesitated, with a fitting diffidence, to render:

"However, it was our sicknesses He took upon Himself,
And He carried the heavy burden of our pain;
But as for us, we considered Him a leper,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
Nevertheless, He was being pierced by our transgressions,
He was being crushed by our iniquities;
The discipline that makes us whole was upon Him;
And by His scourging there is healing for us.
As for us, like sheep, we have wandered;
We have turned every one to his own way;
And as for Him, upon Him Jehovah hath made to alight
The iniquity of us all."

These verses teach in plainest language the vicarious, or substitutionary, suffering of the Servant, the pure for the unholy, the righteous for the unjust. This is a word, which we should not allow to slip and be lost from our modernized and shallowed speech—"vicarious." There are many old and treasured jewels or heirlooms, which we delight to hand on to other generations. These gems are so different from the makes and models of today, so old fashioned and out-of-date. And yet they have messages and meanings which no new things can ever have. Then, shall we let all those jewel-words of Gospel truth be thrown away, just because they have ages of good use to their account? "Vicarious"; "substitution"; "atonement"; "justification"; "righteousness"; "redemption!" We shall keep them, for

they are blood bought, coined from hearts of gold. We shall show them with grateful devotion to our children, and children's children. We shall turn them over, and over again, that every syllable may be appreciated, every facet seen in its bright beauty.

Such is the meaning of these words of this third stanza: the suffering which was substituted for ours, the vicarious atonement of the Messiah. Such evident meaning forever rules out of account any idea of the Jew, as a nation, meeting the requirements of such a Servant. A holy nation, with willing self-abasement; a sinless people, giving itself voluntarily for other peoples; a Jewry holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; needing not to atone first for its own sins; no oppression done by it; no deceit in its mouth! Are these ribald jests we hear—or just plain blasphemy?

The tenses of verse 5 are participial, or present, tenses, bringing the scene of the Cross vividly before us, as something actually transpiring: "He is being pierced by our transgressions." Our backs often have deserved the lash, for we *are* miserable sinners, nor is holy health in us. But see His back ridged and welted instead of ours, and yet the healing is ours; His sore disciplining, but our complete restoration.

The personal pronouns of these verses are their exegetical key. *We* in the first person, *He*

in the third person, are repeatedly set over against each other, to put forward His willing substitution for us in contrast with our willful rejection of Him. As for Him, He took up our sickness on Himself; as for us, we looked on Him as an outcast. As for Him, see Him pierced by our transgressions; as for us, we think only of our own ways! It is the marvel of life and history, that first Jew, then Gentile, cannot see this. How long must their eyes be holden?

From the vivid declaration of the vicarious suffering of the Servant an advance is made to the fourth stanza, in which we are given:

4. *Some details of His great passion,* verses 7 to 9, including also the first clause of verse 10. These details are so unexpected, and so awe-inspiring, as to arrest every reader's attention. The Ethiopian eunuch could not get beyond them without his earnest query: "Of whom speaketh the prophet this?" Marvelous indeed must be the person, of whom such literal words, not figures, are descriptive. To think of them with any nationalist meaning would be an absurdity. Let us try to see them as nearly as possible in their original and literal setting:

"He was oppressed, and He was afflicted,
Yet He was not opening His mouth.
As a lamb led to the slaughter,
And as a ewe dumb before her shearers,
He was not opening His mouth.

Without imprisonment and without justice, He was
taken away;
And of His own generation who was considering this,
That He was cut off from the land of the living
For the transgressions of my people, to whom the stroke
was due!
And one made His grave with the wicked,
And with a rich man in His death.
Although He had done no oppression,
Neither was any deceit in His mouth,
Nevertheless it pleased Jehovah to crush Him with sick-
ness."

The words of the first verse of this stanza, with their description of the Servant's gentle submission to the will of Jehovah, lead our thoughts back to the prophet's vision of Him in chapters *42* and *50*: not crying out, nor lifting up His voice, nor causing it to be heard in the streets; the dutiful tongue of the taught disciple and the attentive, obedient ear; the back turned to the smiters, and the face not hidden from shame and spitting. Even a Pilate marveled at the royal gentleness of the Divine Prisoner standing at his judgment seat.

The lawlessness of His trial and condemnation were literally carried out in the hurried trials, the bribed witnesses, and the prearranged procedure and sentence of Him, who was rushed, railroaded in one morning, through the processes of the courts of Jewish high priest, Roman governor and Herodian tetrarch. A pathetic line is that

which dwells in amazement on the callousness of His own people, in whose place He chose to bear the heavy penalty: "of His own generation, who was considering this!" The longed for Redeemer had come; the Great Son of God, Immanuel among men; the problem of salvation forever solved! And yet those who lived in the presence of it all, of Heaven come down to earth, cared not.

Even provision for the unexpected necessity of His burial is anticipated by the prophet. It was quite taken for granted that He should suffer, as an evil-doer, with the wicked. But it would not come into ordinary thinking to associate Him also with the rich in His death. But it is such a strange turn of thought that is found here, not because the Hebrew mind logically related wickedness and riches. Just the opposite was held true in their philosophy, which linked together righteousness, or Divine favor, and riches. Little more than a touch of the prophet's pen accounts for this strange conjunction of ideas.. The Hebrew poet was fond of word-play, thereby challenging the interest of his reader in his message. Isaiah takes the last letter of the word *rasha,* meaning "wicked," exchanges it with the first letter, and by the mutual exchange is formed the word *ashir,* which means "rich." It is such humanly inexplicable occurrences as this, and there are many of them, which fill with deeper meaning for

us Peter's words about Old Testament prophecy: "holy men spoke from God, carried along by the Holy Spirit." There is, in fact, such a thing as "verbal inspiration," men really speaking "in the Spirit of God."

Christ came to Jerusalem in the prime of manhood. Who could expect arrest, trial and execution? Not a foot of land was His, nor any thought of a sepulcher entertained by His friends. Quite naturally He was sent to die in the companionship of wicked men. But how about His grave? "One" provided for it in the new tomb of the rich man, Joseph, who begged His body of Pilate, Scripture answering to Scripture as the face in a mirror.

The innocence of the Servant is here affirmed, as clearly as when Pilate declared: "I find no fault in Him." It is a rude and cruel parody of Divine prophecy to attempt to interpret this innocence of Israel, or of any other nation. Of Israel Jehovah said: "I knew thee, that thou didst deal treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb" (Isaiah *48*:8). But of the Servant it is here written: "He had done no act of oppression, neither was deceit found in His mouth, yet it pleased Jehovah to crush Him with disease." The words of this last clause are not anti-climactic, but in reality a fitting climax to the narration of these details of His great suffering. In the Old Testament days early death was

held in especial dread. Mortal illness was, certainly in early life, the worst of calamities, against which many prayers (as in Psalm *39*) were made, with strong crying and tears. This is the picture here: the Redeeming One crushed and cut off in the prime of His years!

This stanza ends with death, the shrouded body, and a sealed tomb. We must note this carefully, in order to grasp the meaning of the mighty transition, which comes with the fifth and last stanza:

5. *The exaltation in the highest after humiliation to the lowest,* verses 10-12. The Servant of the preceding stanzas, suffering, rejected, betrayed and killed, appears now in victory and with an endless life. This is precisely the line of thought, which Paul followed when he wrote: "becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God hath highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name (Jesus), which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Phil. *2*:8-10). The words of this stanza are:

"When His life shall make a trespass offering,
He shall see seed, He shall prolong His days,
And the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand;
He shall see, and be satisfied with, the travail of His soul;
By His knowledge shall My Servant, the Righteous One,
Make righteousness for many;

And He must bear their iniquities.
Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the many,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong;
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And was numbered with the transgressors."

Some one may ask where in the Old Testament shall we look for such declarations of the Resurrection of our Lord as are found in His own words: "thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead" (Luke *24*:46); and also in the words of Paul: "it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead" (Acts *17*:3). The answer to the question is found in this great Servant chapter, which tells how, after death and burial, He lives again to reign and to intercede.

We also find in these verses the primary source of Paul's theology of redemption. If one should launch his canoe into the wide stream of the Letter to the Romans, and make his way upstream, seeking the source of the great tide of truth, his journey would at last bring him to these words of Isaiah: "by His knowledge shall my Servant, the Righteous One, justify (*i. e.*, make righteous) many." The reason, or ground, for this righteousness of which He is the efficient cause for many is added in the very following clause: for "He shall (or must) bear their iniquities." For Paul, and his fellow apostles and

missionaries, all Old Testament law was fulfilled, and all prophetic hope realized, in Jesus Christ.

The unselfishness of the Christ is another of the fine touches of this remarkable prophetic sketch: "I will divide Him a portion with the *many.*" The Son, seated at the Father's right hand, the only begotten of the Father, had of right all power and possessions. But He was unwilling to enjoy these alone, the rather desiring to bring many sons into glory with Himself. The price which He paid for their right of sonship with Himself was precious; it was the extreme of costliness and self-denial, as Isaiah's story of the Servant well shows. But after it had been fully paid, He could stand victorious with them before the Father, and say: "Behold! I and the children whom God has given me" (Heb. *2*:13). "Father I will that those whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory" (John *17*:24).

The Psalm of the Suffering Servant comes to a fitting close with an epilogue of two lines, covering in brief but comprehensive completeness the whole history of redemption. First, there is the fact of the atonement: "He *bore* the sin of many," with the verb in the past tense, signifying an accomplished atonement. Secondly, there is the intercession on High: "He *makes* intercession for the transgressors," with the verb in the present, or future tense. Our Lord brought

these words into their full meaning when He said to His disciples: "I will make request of the Father for you"; for "I came out from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world and go unto the Father," (John *16*:26-28). The most adequate comment on this epilogue is found in the words of the man, who owed so much to this chapter, and for that reason used it so often. "It is Christ Jesus that died (for the sins of many), yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (the transgressors)" Romans *8*:34.

After the accomplished sacrifice, and the resurrection in triumph, of the 53d chapter, we expect to find songs of praise, victor's songs. And such are chapters *54* and *55*. The former is the song of Zion enlarged and spread abroad over the earth:

"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear,
Break forth into singing, and cry aloud.
Enlarge the place of thy tent,
And let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitation,
Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.
This is the heritage of the *servants* of Jehovah,
And their righteousness which is of Me."

Chapter *55* contains the first evangelistic hymn to be sung after the story of the accomplished

redemption, with a full and free offer of salvation:

> "Ho, every one that thirsteth,
> Come ye to the waters.
> Seek ye the Lord, while He may be found;
> Call ye upon Him, while He is near."

It could not be otherwise than that the wonderful salvation accomplished by the Servant should be followed and heralded by these Gospel songs.

This theme is carried further in Isaiah *61*, which tells how the Servant Himself is the first bearer of the good tidings, which mission He proclaims in His own words: "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon Me; because Jehovah hath anointed Me to preach good tidings." To us it may seem a long way down the centuries to a day in the synagogue at Nazareth, when these words appear again in Scripture (Luke *4*). But how brief that time may have seemed to the Eternal One, who first spoke them through Isaiah in olden time; and how easily He took them up again as fulfilled in the day which He anticipated in His first utterance of them!

With Isaiah *63*:1-6 comes the final and complete consummation of Isaiah's vision. Here Immanuel, the King of Righteousness of the first part of Isaiah, and the Suffering and Risen Servant of the second part, are reconciled, harmonized and proved to be one and the same. The Great King must stoop to suffer, in order to rise to save,

After passing into the deep and woeful depths, He comes forth more royal. And chapter *63* hails the Servant of *53* as the King of chapters *9* and *11*. All through the verses run the blood-stains of Isaiah *53*, in the word Edom, in the wine presses of Bozrah, in the raiment spattered and stained with life-blood:

"Who is this that cometh from Edom,
With crimsoned garments from Bozrah?
This that is blood-red in His apparel?
I that speak in Righteousness, Mighty to save.
I have trodden the winepress alone;
Their life-blood is sprinkled upon my garments,
And I have stained with redemption blood all my raiment.
For the day of vengeance was in my heart,
And the year of my redeemed had come."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A BRIEF review of the general course of the preceding chapters will be necessary, in order to gather up some of the lines of interpretation and some of the particular conclusions into a more comprehensive view of Gospel prophecy. And to this summary should be added some consideration of the benefits and practical uses of prophecy in Christian experience and service.

The contention of chapters One and Three is emphasized once more; for it is essential to our understanding of Messianic Prophecy to bear in mind that this Hope was not sporadic nor occasional, but found in every age of the people's history, as also in all the literature of the Old Testament. We found it in the heart of the first family in those earliest ages; it was the theme, insistently urged, with which the canon of prophecy closed its pages. Eve clung desperately to it; Malachi megaphoned it down the centuries intervening between the Old and the New. The hope for Messianic redemption was written into the Law of Moses, as Jesus often said. It was the major postulate of Hebrew philosophy, the first dogma of their theology, the invigorating incentive in morality. It made trial more tolerable, and assured a compensating future. It

brought God always near, it trampled doubt down, and transformed deserts of fear into gardens of peace. They themselves called it shelter from tempest, living springs in desert sands, shade of a great cliff in a weary land, and songs of joy in lonely wanderings. And this hope we have followed through all the Old Testament; in ancient annals, in Law, in history, in Job's hard wrestling, in the songs of psalmists, in the meditations of sages, in the visions of prophets. The bulb which, at a finger touch, gives us light by night, is not itself electricity. It is only one of a thousand contacts with the element which courses through the wire, pours out of the power house, and flows unceasing through the unseen channels provided for it in the wide universe. Particular prophetic passages are not the sum total of prophecy; but they are the illuminations of contact with that strong, steady current of hope, which ran through the book and the life of Israel.

Furthermore, this hope has been found to be ever taking on itself the forms and ideals, and even the atmospheric conditions of each age through which it passed, expressing itself usually in terms of the dominant idea or need of that age. Keeping fast its old forms and ideals, it was ever gathering new means of expression, combining and harmonizing both in new messages of promise. Messiah was made known to Eve as "seed," the fruit of her own body and the

child of her heart. To Abraham He was the promised "seed" in terms of a great posterity. To David the promise adds "son" to the ancient idea of the seed. For Moses the Hope takes form in types and shadows of the Law, and in the figure of the Prophet, the most notable personage of that day. Immanuel and the Servant appear in the vision of Isaiah. Zechariah sees Him, in days of the dual administration of Zerubbabel and Joshua, as King-Priest. And finally, Malachi can even tell us of the herald, who will run before the Coming Lord.

There are, at the same time, certain Messianic phrases and ideas, which run regularly through large parts, some of them through the the whole, of the Old Testament. One of these is the Divine name, "Jehovah," signifying "He will be," both the personal name of the Deity and at the same time the name always associated with the promise and with the everlasting covenant. Does Elohim put Abraham to trial, Genesis *22?* It is, however, Jehovah, who stays the father's uplifted hand, and opens up with the renewed Covenant-promise a future of blessedness.

Insistence, throughout the Old Testament, on the personality of God, which could only come to full realization and find its final guarantee in the Incarnation, is thus illuminated with Messianic light. Righteousness and holiness, the two essential attributes of the Deity, are bound up, espe-

cially by Isaiah, with the hope of Messiah's salvation. The Kingdom of God, or of Heaven, and The Day of the Lord were always so generally recognized as associated with the Messiah, that in the New Testament they need no explanation, but pass without a question into its parables and records, as also into the Christian's vocabulary. The Branch, The Son of David, The Prince of Peace, the King, the Priest, the Prophet, the Servant, and other Messianic titles have been followed by us in preceding pages through the centuries or generations of their usage in the Old Testament. How rich is the contribution made by the Old Testament to the vesture and titles and attributes of the Coming King!

With the continuance and development of the life of the Old Testament people the Messianic ideal also grew, and developed from the primitive and simple to the more complex and detailed. Adam and Eve could not have understood and received comfort from the more elaborate portraiture of Messiah in Isaiah's visions; nor would promises of deliverance through prophet, priest or king have had any meaning for Eve. But she knew the meaning of a mother's hope for her own child. Family ties and heart needs were near and evident to her. So through promise in the coming of the Saviour as the child of woman her face was lifted toward the future Divine event. This germ of faith developed into larger form in the

Abrahamic covenant, and took clear-cut outline in the promised Son of David. The Psalms and Isaiah developed even more distinctly some features of the Davidic covenant. Jeremiah and Zechariah, in following generations, brought into larger development Isaiah's earlier and simpler figure of the Branch. Isaiah began with the metaphor of the new sprouting life after the winter's deadness; then advanced to the new shoot or branch growing out of the stock, or stump, of the fallen house of Jesse. Jeremiah combined it with Isaiah's King of Righteousness: "I will cause a Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David"; and Zechariah adds the form of Isaiah *53*: "My Servant the Branch." Even within one book, that of Isaiah, we have growth and progress in his conception of the Messiah, from general to individual, from national to personal.

There is ungrounded and foolish fear in some minds over the use of the words "progress" and "development" of Bible doctrine or revelation. Where or why such antipathy should have originated, it is difficult to answer. It is foolish and indefensible, because it is untrue. Growth and progress in the gracious unfolding of the Messianic hope is a Scriptural reality, a blessed reality. It is understood that God and His truth are the same in essence from the beginning to the completion of revelation. But the manner and degree of the unfolding of His truth changed and ad-

vanced with each age. The glorious vision of Isaiah on the first pages of Genesis would be unthinkable. Sages and saints needed to learn many lessons, pass through hard trials, feel the keen pang of many sorrows, look back over a long period of Divine leading, before their hearts were ready for the mysteries of Isaiah *53*. A child has the same life and takes the same food in essence as the grown man. But through the years there is for him progress in food, in capacity, and in understanding. So also in Prophecy there must be milk for babes before the strong meat for men can be offered. Our Lord could not tell His disciples all things, for there were some things which they could not bear, until the time of larger spiritual capacity had come. It is in the unfolding of the Messianic hope that we see so clearly the leading and developing love of our Father for us.

We have also found in our studies of Prophecy, that it is not a formal thing nor a mechanical record, but a living reality. It is the life-blood of the Old Testament, coursing through all its chapters, the beating heart whose pulsations can be heard anywhere in its many books. Sometimes underneath dry and parched prairies streams of water run. The sunken well brings the stream to the surface, to quench thirst and irrigate fields. Such a current of hope runs under all of the Old Testament, brought to the surface here and there

for rich blessings, when some prophet has tapped that living stream. This current of thinking and hoping runs steadily through all the Old Testament days and books, and at last finds its outlet into the New Testament, there to make still richer deposits of truth. But whether in Old or New, it is always the same river of life. So Paul reasoned and illustrated out of the Old Testament, that Jesus was Messiah, at Thessalonica, Acts *17*:2-3; and Christ so opened the minds of His disciples to understand, after His death and resurrection, Luke *24*:44-46. The New Testament believers saw their living Lord in all the experiences and longings of the Old Testament days.

With such understanding of the Messianic message of the Old Testament those disciples made constant and most practical use of it in life and service. In trial or perplexity or sorrow, under attack, or making appeal for faith to others, they turned with confidence to the prophecies of the Old Testament, using them as irresistible and beyond controversy. The Jesus, whom they had seen and loved, was for them also the glorious living Messiah of the Old Testament. The Gospels, from the first chapter of Matthew onward to the end of John, are filled with the appeal to prophecy. Our Lord Himself was constantly using it to comfort His disciples, to put His enemies and accusers to rout, to reach hearts

and bring them to penitence, and to stay His own heart in dark hours.

Mark began with Old Testament prophetical messages the Gospel which was written to lead Gentiles to Christ. Luke's Gospel for the world fills its first chapters with Old Testament sacrifice and psalms. John thinks of the Old Creation Story as leading up to Him who makes all things new. Of course, Matthew joins his message by genealogy back to Abraham and David.

Romans is an interpretation of Isaiah and Genesis in terms of Jesus Christ. Hebrews makes its appeal for steadfast faith in Christ by bringing Psalms and all the Law to prove the superiority of Jesus Christ. Every one of its chapters is an Old Testament appeal for Jesus as the Messiah. These Old Testament witnesses around us call us and cheer us on in the great race set before us. The book of Revelation is the vision of the Risen Christ, set in the framework and imagery of Old Testament apocalyptic books. Take the Old Testament out of the New, and see what mutilation has resulted! It was thus that the hearts of the Gospel days needed the Old Testament, and used it always and everywhere.

The Old Testament was used by the New Testament writers to adorn their messages with grace and strength. The sermons of the first missionaries, recorded for us in the Book of Acts, were preached from Old Testament texts, and its

points of appeal sent home with Old Testament illustrations. Peter, Stephen and Paul all brought their great climaxes of appeal with Old Testament history or psalms. Stephen's speech followed the ancient history of Israel until it arrived at the golden age of David and Solomon, from which he skillfully passed to Jesus, the Son of David and Prince of Peace.

The clear, strong arguments throughout the Letter to the Romans are Old Testament interpretations. Here the Law, the Covenant, righteousness, holiness, Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Isaiah, and Hosea all figure prominently. Our Lord Himself was always holding the attention of His hearers by appeal to their own Bible. The Book of Revelation found in the Old Testament prophets the numbers, figures, imagery, and tender phrases, to give its strange beauty and power to the book which was found worthy to close the whole canon of Scripture. For in it the Old and New meet, to challenge the love and admiration of all ages.

It will be profitable to our modern study and teaching of the New Testament, if we can have always at hand the help which the Old Testament only can offer. The New is really unintelligible without the Old, from which it takes its beginning, draws its truths, illustrations and language, and finds proof of its Gospel message. We have been too ready to part the two asunder, and hold

fast to the New, while we abandon the Old to the whims of rationalists. If there were no Old, the New would be an enigma. Possibly the phrase describing the faithful scribe as "bringing forth things old and new," means this very thing: interpreting the Old in terms of the New, and adorning the New with the matchless beauties of the Old. There is a wonderful Gospel appeal made possible to him, who will use with understanding love the Prophets' vision of Messiah.

The Old Testament is an unfinished book. Its longed-for and promised consummation never came. It left its people in a state worse in its latter than in its former days. It also would forever remain an enigma without the New, like the restless, wandering Jew, who finds no place of resting for the sole of his feet, the man indeed without a country. So it would be without destiny or completeness, its conclusion the sad note of despair of the Book of Ecclesiastes. All is vanity indeed if the Old Testament is all. It is so easy, as it is also so right and proper, to lead hearts through the visions and longings of the Old Testament to the New Testament fulfillment in Christ.

The Old Testament is a very human book, full of sound sense and a true and thorough psychology. It is a wide and fruitful field for the study of man's nature, his sins, sorrows, needs, dangers. While it calls to life, it also tells of sin, judgment

and soul-loss. From its honest method of dealing with men and their sins and their yearnings the way is clear and straight to Christ. It raises questions, He answers them. The hope that filled the Old Testament hearts with the intensest yearning ever known and recorded, could not be disappointed. To meet and satisfy it God sent forth His own Son.

All along that highway of the Old Testament, so often spoken of by Isaiah, the arrows and index fingers all point in the right direction—to Galilee and Calvary and Olivet. The saints who walked there adorned the way with fair flowers of thought and expression. The monuments of their pilgrimage through the ages remain to us as the gems of Old Testament song and story. And the songs sung by those pilgrims on their journey toward the New Zion have never been hushed, lingering still in the vales through which they went, and finding echo in every church on earth. We can use with power today the message of the Christ in the Old Testament, as He Himself used it so often and so effectively. The Old Testament has given expression to the deepest need of the whole world, ancient and modern, as no other book has even attempted to do. There is no other fulfillment except in Christ. No completer and more evident fulfillment could be conceived of than that which the Gospel offers. If in the days of apostles a pagan world could be shown

the glories of Jesus Christ through the Old Testament Scriptures, as paralleled by the New Testament revelation, why not make the same great appeal today to our new paganism? More preaching and more teaching of the Old Testament! Not as Jewish literature or fine archæological remains; but again today, just as in those first days, as the book of the Living and Saving Christ. We shall be foolish indeed to abandon so rich, so varied, so human, so Divine an evangelistic aid.

But what about the Jew? Is he not to have a Saviour? We are forgetting our duty to him, as enjoined on us in our own New Testament: "to the Jew first." Certainly he has some right of consideration in what should be his own household of faith. Although a wanderer from home, he is still our elder brother, with right to some place in our thought, and some part in our patrimony. We have allowed to slip from our consideration Paul's tender appeal for the Jews, his own loved people, in Romans *9-11,* or we should not be keeping the door of hope shut in their faces. Paul did and gave much for us. May we never forget his kinsman according to the flesh; "who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service, and the promises; whose are the fathers." Yea, and more: "of whom Christ came, as concerning the flesh, who is God

over all, blessed forever" (Rom. *9*:3-5). "Christ for the world we sing." So let us sing; but not forget the part of the world to which He came first, rather to whom He was coming through all the ages: the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Years ago when my congregation was helping to sustain a successful local mission work among our Jewish neighbors, the young Jewish evangelist employed in the work would often say to me in pets of impatience: "Why spend all your money in world missions and home equipment; why organize so elaborately your Gentile forces? Convert the Jew! and he will convert the world! Convert the Jew! and you will raise up and send to the ends of the earth a thousand flaming Pauls."

There may be for us much food for sober thought in what that Jewish enthusiast said. But if we ever bring the modern Jew to his saving Christ—and God forbid that we should forget or fail to try—it must be by the path which leads to Christ through his and our Old Testament. We must be able to bring together for him into one story the Christ of Prophecy and the Jesus of Bethlehem, Galilee, Calvary, and Glory. Then it can be fulfilled, as it is written: "the fulness of the Gentiles gathered in; and so shall all Israel be saved."

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